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THE NEW REPUBLIC

February 3, 1979 Price One Dollar

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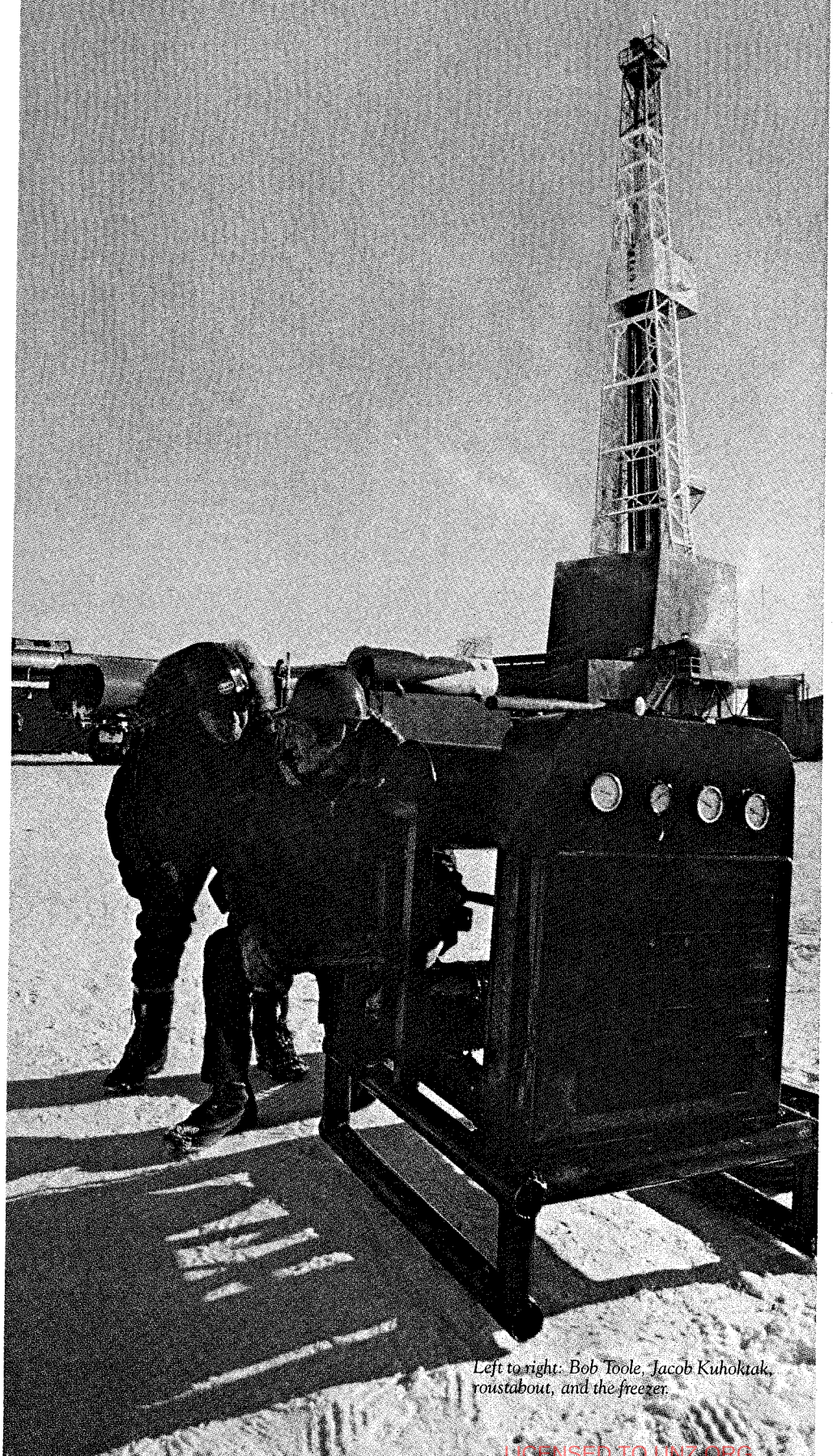
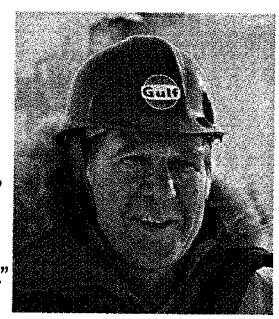
"It's 52° below zero up here, but, crazy as it sounds, we need this machine to keep the ground frozen."



Left to right: Bob Toole, Jacob Kuhoktak, roustabout, and the freezer.

"When you drill for gas north of the Arctic Circle, the way we're doing here at Canada's Mackenzie Delta, you expect a lot of problems," says Bob Toole, drilling superintendent for Gulf.

"But this one's a real fooler. It's a freezing unit. Even at 52° below zero, we need it to keep the ground around the wellhead frozen.



"At temperatures as low as this, you have to invent new ways to do almost everything."

"The problem is that when the drilling mud comes up from the bottom of the hole, maybe a mile down, it's hot enough to melt the permafrost that's holding up the whole rig.

"If the permafrost melted, the hole would get bigger and bigger, and the operation would have to come to a halt.

"Our freezer keeps the top thirty feet of the casing around the drill pipe at temperatures below freezing, so that doesn't happen.

"This country is probably one of the toughest spots on earth to drill for natural gas. But we're drilling the wells. We're meeting the challenge."

Gulf

Gulf people: meeting the challenge.

Gulf Oil Corporation

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TRB

from Washington
February 3, 1979

The Grand Tour

Jimmy Carter is sending Chinese Vice Premier Teng out to see America. He will see Atlanta, Houston and Seattle. Twenty years ago Eisenhower sent Nikita Khruschev out on a similar trip. Ike said he wanted Khruschev to see the "best of America" and he ended up (with 400 pressmen) watching Hollywood filming *Can Can* (bare thighs and black garters), and having Farmer Garst of Coon Rapids, Iowa, throw silage at him (and us). This is as good a time as any to tell you about silage: it is put in a pit of greenish stuff like tossed salad and it smells like corn syrup, and cattle eat it for some obscure reason.

The Khruschev trip was the time I climbed on the check-out counter of the Stonestown Shopping Center supermarket near San Francisco, and later I climbed a real tree at the Garst farm while mild-mannered Harrison Salisbury of *The New York Times* was being kicked by Farmer Garst.

I have a feeling that if visiting foreigners see America they generally like us. It was true of Khruschev who brought with him two daughters and a son-in-law, and his plump, placid, pleasant wife (who showed pictures of her grandchildren to Bob Hope and Frank Sinatra). He also brought a screaming inferiority complex. What Vice Premier Teng (pronounced Dung) brings with him I don't know, but it is significant, I think, that they reportedly are showing wall posters back in Peking with quotations from the Declaration of Independence. If true it is a significant fact, to which I will return later.

Things didn't start well on the Khruschev trip. At Los Angeles he and movie mogul Spyros Skouras engaged in a public boasting match as to which was the more "self-made," and Mayor Poulson lectured him publicly about democracy. Mr. K told chaperone Henry Cabot Lodge he would fly home. We rode next day from Los Angeles up to San Francisco in a Southern Pacific 16-car, quarter-mile-long, air-conditioned special train with a helicopter in front, another behind, motor cops whizzing along parallel side roads, guards at crossroads, and a geiger counter test for hot-dogs served at platform stops. But now the crowds were curious and friendly and the sun came out (the Russians wore heavy underwear). Khruschev loved it. He was roly-poly, with a barrel chest and a queer gait, half amble, half waddle; he drank gallons of mineral water specially flown in from Russia and when he folded his fingers on his stomach he looked like an alert woodchuck. He was one of the most powerful leaders on earth. He and Ike wanted to slow the nuclear arms race. Nobody could doubt his intelligence. Averell Harriman entertained some multi-millionaires at K's request ("to see the real rulers of America") and after the affair ended, Thomas K. Finletter asked Ken Galbraith (two intellectuals courteously included), "Do you have any doubt who was the smartest man in there tonight?" They didn't.

I think if Vice Premier Teng can be left alone a bit in America, as occasionally Khruschev was, he will love it. Early one morning on Nob Hill I watched Mr. K look out over magnificent San Francisco and express pleasure that transcended the language barrier. A municipal truck rumbled up the hill, scooped in the trash, crunched it flat, and rolled off. Nobody spoke. The truck spoke for itself. Khruschev grinned.

He must see a supermarket, somebody said. He must see how the plain people shopped. I have the list of accompanying pressmen beside me now: it was a world spectacular—*Bild Zeiting, Paris Match, Daily Mail, Times of India, Neue Zuercher Zeitung, New York Herald Tribune, Aftonbladet*, several hundred of them. We went through that supermarket like a freshet. Stunned customers ducked out of the way. Me, I climbed on a check-out counter. Always in the center of the mob was a little knot, Khruschev and Russian and American secret service trying to protect him while he calmly squeezed cabbages and thumped cantaloupes. A display pyramid of glass coffee bottles collapsed when a photographer tried to climb it. News photographers have a ferocious competitive code that few outsiders comprehend. After the fracas we exchanged experiences. "Did you see that woman who had fainted?" asked one. "Fainted—I thought she was dead," said his companion equably. And we demanded of another why he was fighting the butcher. What caused the combat? "I don't know," he said, in a tone of injured mystification. "He attacked me . . . I was only standing on his meat."

The encounter at the Garst farm was similar, in a bucolic setting. Millionaire Garst had been in Russia where he had told Khruschev how to grow corn. He thought he was going to have a quiet reunion with his old Kremlin friend. He prepared an eight-page summary for the press: "when corn is down to 30 percent moisture it has reached maximum dry weight." But this wasn't the kind of thing newspapers were interested in.

They came through the tall corn, they came across the ensilage, they hovered just overhead in helicopters, and Garst resisted them with bare hands, and yells and angry missiles. Khruschev loved it. He had an overwhelming relish for the comical. Henry Cabot Lodge was tall, K short; Lodge aristocratic, K earthy; Lodge Brahmin-educated, K a peasant; they looked at each other warily. Then Lodge got tired of a muscular Russian secret service man who kept pinning his arms and moving him out of the way, evidently mistaking him for a reporter. In his reminiscences Lodge said that when he saw the security man approach a third time "it was beginning to annoy me," and he pushed him into a corner. Mr. K immediately heard of the exploit, which delighted him, and the ice broke somewhat.

It was San Francisco that did it. "When we arrived the sun was shining," Mr. K told all Russia over radio when he returned, "the climate of this wonderful city was quite different; the sun's rays warmed us, but warmer still was the cordial, unconstrained reception we were given."

So how about Vice Chairman Teng? If they are showing excerpts from the Declaration of Independence in Peking I suggest the quotation from Samuel Eliot Morison's *Oxford History of the American People*: "If the American Revolution has produced nothing but the Declaration of Independence, it would have been worthwhile. . . . The beauty and cogency of the preamble, reaching back to remotest antiquity and forward to an indefinite future, have lifted the hearts of millions of men and will continue to do so. . . .

"'We hold these truths to be self-evident.' . . . These words are more revolutionary than anything written by Robespierre, Marx, or Lenin, more explosive than the atom, a continual challenge to ourselves, as well as an inspiration to the oppressed of all the world."

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

February 3, 1979

Two Complaints

Two lawsuits were brought in federal courts during January, both by groups with admirable liberal purposes and both demonstrating the suicidal impulse that directs so many liberal energies these days. In California, a federally funded legal aid organization has sued the state university system to stop research aimed at improving agricultural productivity. And in Washington, a coalition of environmental groups has sued to prevent the White House from influencing the Interior Department's decision about strip mining regulations.

California Rural Legal Assistance says in its complaint against the University of California that the university's effort to develop labor-saving farm machinery benefits "a narrow group of agribusiness interests with no valid public purpose, contributes to agricultural unemployment or the displacement of farm workers, or the demise of the small family farm, or the deterioration of the rural home and rural life." As evidence of this nefarious impact, the complaint points out that during the 1960s, the state's tomato crop increased by half while the number of tomato pickers needed dropped by 60 percent.

As we said two weeks ago ("Liberals and Inflation," *TNR*, January 20), it is essential for liberals to start taking the productivity issue seriously. Regular increases in productivity are the only way to provide both rising prosperity for workers and larger government revenues for social welfare programs, while avoiding inflation. It is wrong to support government policies that promote inefficiency—trade barriers, farm subsidies, needless defense spending—just because they preserve jobs, or certain kinds of jobs. To oppose research aimed at increasing productivity is simply insane. Agriculture is the one industry in which America still leads the world. During recurrent droughts and famines elsewhere, America also feeds the world. Producing more food with less land and labor hardly serves only "a narrow group of agribusiness interests with no valid public purpose."

It's not necessary to stop progress in order to rescue its victims. Displaced farm workers are entitled to retraining programs, to give them skills that are really needed. Such an effort might diminish the power of Cesar Chavez (who appears to be behind this lawsuit), but it would be a genuine service to the workers he claims to represent. A life spent stooping to pick fruit under the California sun is not so rewarding that we should rush into court to reserve places in the fields for the children of this generation of farm workers.

This lawsuit is another example of the misuse of government legal services. California Rural Legal Assistance gets $2.5 million a year from the federal government's Legal Services Corporation. Legal services are intended to help the poor when they unavoidably get caught up in the complex legal machinery of modern society—in divorces, disputes with landlords, tussles with the welfare bureaucracy, etc. But too often legal aid lawyers use poor people as guinea pigs in an attempt to impose through the courts some fanciful middle-class view of social justice. A good case can be made that technology has ruined the American tomato, and that perhaps agricultural research should be redirected. But that argument belongs in the state legislature, not in the federal court.

The real purpose of the Washington lawsuit by three environmental groups (as opposed to their legal contrivance) is more appealing. They want to stop the Carter administration from gutting regulations to clean up strip mining as part of the fight against inflation. Plenty of other regulations are more costly and less beneficial, but the White House is afraid to tackle them. Nevertheless this second attempt to make social policy by lawsuit is, if anything, even more insidious.

In 1977, Congress gave the secretary of the interior authority to regulate strip mining. The Interior Department held hearings and produced proposed regulations last September. More recently, Secretary Cecil Andrus began conferring with Charles Schultze,

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chairman of the president's Council of Economic Advisers, about the need to balance environmental concerns with the fight against inflation. The National Wildlife Federation, the Council of Southern Mountains and the Natural Resources Defense Council think these meetings were illegal. They argue that the White House has no right to interfere with the Interior Department's regulatory authority. They want the courts to forbid Andrus and Schultze, or their assistants, from meeting in the future, and to order Andrus to forget anything Schultze may have told him about the inflationary impact of his proposed regulations.

The trouble is that there are more than 60 agencies with regulatory authority within the executive branch. (This does not include the truly independent regulatory agencies, such as the Federal Trade Commission.) The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, part of the Labor Department, regulates (among other things) the permissible level of cotton dust in factories. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy are supposed to agree on a smokestack emission standard for coal-fired power plants. The Council on Wage and Price Stability issues inflation guidelines. Each agency has its assigned mission and its avid interest groups. Inevitably these social goals, admirable in themselves, conflict. Yet this lawsuit over the strip mining rules, and others like it by other interest groups, contend that the president is not entitled to strike an intelligent balance between the conflicting goals the executive branch is supposed to pursue.

Surely it is the ultimate assertion of power by special interest groups to claim that not even the president of the United States can interfere with their little duchies within his own executive branch. And surely it is arrogant of lawyers to insist that their own formal processes are more appropriate ways to chart social policy than the give and take of democratic politics.

White House Watch

Budget Story

From the time last April when the President and his chief advisers started talking and thinking about the fiscal 1980 budget, the second that would be entirely his, there was never any doubt that it would be one that he could call "lean and austere." How lean, how austere, and how far to go in publicly committing himself to such a budget were subjects of much argument and some inner dissent right up to the day in January when the last changes in the figures and in the accompanying message were made and the whole thing went to press. But the President made it clear from the beginning of the process that he wasn't open to argument and didn't want to hear any about the central thrust and the reason for it. The reason was his judgment that inflation had become his and the country's most serious problem and that the federal budget had to be geared, along with monetary and all other relevant public policy, to combat it.

Whether this budget really is as lean and austere, as soundly calculated and as effectively counter-inflationary as Jimmy Carter says it is are questions left here to contending experts and interested parties. This report is about the process that produced the budget, some of the issues that arose in the making of it, and positions taken by some of the principal actors.

The process differed from those of former years in four major respects. It absorbed less of the President's time and attention than Presidents usually devote to their budgets and much less than Carter gave in 1977 to the current (fiscal 1979) budget. Budget director James T. McIntyre Jr., the modest Georgian who succeeded Bert Lance, assumed an extraordinary—perhaps unprecedented—degree of authority over the process and made more of the critical decisions than any director in memory has. Under McIntyre the Office of Management and Budget imposed more of its own program and value judgments on departments and agencies than it and its predecessor, the Bureau of the Budget, ever previously imposed. Fourth and finally, in the phase just beginning with submission of the budget to Congress, OMB and the White House staff have moved into and taken over the task of supporting it to an extent never previously known.

Apart from initial discussions with economic and fiscal advisers at the start of each budget cycle, Presidents in recent years have been deeply involved in budget preparation at two stages—when the budget director's reviews of allowable expenditure are passed to federal departments and agencies, and when department and agency heads appeal final budget office decisions with which they disagree to the President. Carter followed this procedure in 1977 and, with his notorious appetite for detail, spent uncounted hours in consultation with cabinet secretaries, agency directors, their chief assistants and his own budget executives and technicians. Last year he skipped the initial revision stage and formally intervened only at the final appeal stage. Thanks to the broad delegation of authority to McIntyre, the President had to handle only 15 appeals, a phenomenally low total. Six of them were taken to him mainly to inform him of politically sensitive factors and issues; only nine entailed actual requests that he overrule McIntyre.

A qualification and two explanations are offered in OMB and White House accounts of this change in

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Correspondence

George Ball's position on Vietnam

To the editors:

It is a pity that a very good journalistic idea like Grey Eminences should be so inaccurately and tendentiously executed, as is the case with your George Ball piece ("The Grand Designer," *TNR*, January 13). Donald Katz converts into a snide suggestion of small-minded trans-Atlantic elitism the crucial Ball position—that there was no important US national interest to be served by our involvement in Vietnam. What a simple and sensible position history tells us it was.

I think, too, that Katz seriously misrepresents what he calls the "conclusion" of Ball's October 5, 1964 memorandum to McNamara, Rusk and Bundy. It argued against the commitment of more American forces to Vietnam and urged a reconsideration of Southeast Asian policy in the light of overall national interests. "It is essential that this be done before we commit military forces to a line of action that could put events in the saddle and destroy our freedom to choose the policies that are at once the most effective and the most prudent." Those, following an exhaustive survey of less dangerous options, are the concluding words of that memorandum. Katz, weirdly, characterizes them as an apology "for not having a solution to the problem. . . ."

Robert Manning
Editor in Chief
The Atlantic Monthly
Boston, Massachusetts

The bottom line on veterans' pensions

To the editors:

I was a bit surprised at the lack of depth in John Osborne's article of December 9, 1978 entitled "Ratchet Racket." It was atypical of the fairness I have come to expect from that writer.

Mr. Feldman's use of the term "ratchet effect," upon which the article seemed to turn, was an entirely correct one. A cursory knowledge of economics would show that the "ratchet effect" simply means that particular economic factors are mobile in only one direction. It is most frequently seen in regard to prices in monopoly or near-monopoly situations—and the mobile direction is generally upward.

Feldman's hypothesis is that the president is not, in fairness, going to give a substantial increase for non-service connected pensions and then hold the line or cut back on those who have received disability from combat and who have traditionally been compensated at higher levels. That is the point that Mr. Osborne missed totally. While the $30-billion figure may be disputed, the reasoning, based upon precedent, is impeccable.

Further, the bottom line of one of Mr. Osborne's arguments was that because Max Cleland and Bob Muller had full-time jobs with substantial salaries, that they were somehow bilking the government for extra benefits. Completely ignored are the physical, emotional, and financial hardships of their medical problems, and a probable lower life expectancy due to their injuries.

I have worked with Stuart Feldman and Bob Muller on Vietnam veterans problems often and have found nobody more competent or dedicated in solving those problems. That reputation remains undiminished in this office.

David E. Bonior
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Kauffmann saves the day

To the editors:

In the recent correspondence pages of *TNR* there has been a rash of subscription-canceling by dissatisfied customers. Although these unhappy readers give an occasional obtuse reason for their decisions, I'm sure you as easily-baffled editors would like to be informed as to the process behind their agonized conclusions. No problem. You see, there is a careful system of plus and minus points accorded each regular contributor, not including the excellent contributors from without *TNR* out of fairness to those within. (This may not explain the practical joker who recently canceled his subscription not once, but *twice*.)

For example, an issue begins with TRB, who informs us that South Carolina has seceded from the Union. Plus one for nostalgia. Next, the feature editorial distrusts the cannibalistic but wonderfully egalitarian Soviets. Minus one. Then John Osborne unaccountably provides the names and stations of everybody within 500 yards of Hamilton Jordan, but is *very* fair about it. Plus one. Next comes that slick of oily sentiment gliding superficially over the clear water of considered opinion—Henry Fairlie. Minus one. (Minus another one when Henry uses the word "painterliness" in yet another essay.) You can always count on Kondracke to say something sensible. Plus one. Then, Georgetown Diarist Martin Peretz blathers on about his impossibly decent (and possibly obnoxious) children. Minus one. Final score: Minus one. Please cancel my subscription. Wait a minute, Stanley Kauffmann says he likes *Close Encounters*! Plus *two* for a final adjusted score of plus one—revive my subscription, but mind your p's and q's and please publish more photographs and cartoons.

Timothy D. Carlson
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Up in arms

To the editors:

As a longtime reader of *The New Republic* I am distressed at your hawklike and uncritical approach to the arms buildup. In my opinion our spending for armaments is a far more serious problem than inflation. It is a major factor in creating inflation. Such spending also plays a key role in the other major problems with which we are now confronted—unemployment, exhaustion of our natural resources, especially oil and gas, our low productivity, our unfavorable balance of trade and the sick dollar.

Why should we build ever more nuclear weapons? We already have enough to destroy every Russian city seven times over. We are told that the world now has enough nuclear weapons to be equivalent to three tons of dynamite for every man, woman and child on earth. We and the Russians together are adding to the nuclear stockpile at the rate of three bombs every day.

Instead of concentrating all our efforts on ending the arms race, we are devoting our time and energy to getting another SALT agreement. Defense spending went up after SALT I. It will continue upward if SALT II is negotiated, perhaps faster than it would without the agreement. This is so

(continued on page 39)

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Carter. Frequent consultation with McIntyre and occasional consultation on budget matters with department and agency heads kept him abreast of the primary budget figures and issues. Throughout, McIntyre and others take care to say, "he knew his budget." With the exhausting 1977 experience and the knowledge gained from it behind him, Carter was easily persuaded by McIntyre and the senior deputy for budget affairs, Bowman Cutter, that he didn't need to put as much time and effort into budget preparation last year. Carter himself had realized that he'd been wasting too much of his time and energies on details better left to others. A cabinet member closely involved in budget business volunteered a third explanation: "He's tired."

Differences over budget issues between some of the President's principal associates provide interesting insights. Secretary of the Treasury Michael Blumenthal argued from the beginning of the cycle last April that this budget would have to be *very* tight, *really* tight, and that Carter should publicly commit himself to such a budget in specific terms at the earliest feasible moment. Vice President Walter Mondale, domestic policy adviser Stuart Eizenstat and McIntyre differed with Blumenthal. They felt that Carter with his pledge to NATO allies of a real increase, discounting inflation, of three percent in defense expenditure had already locked himself into an unnecessarily rigid situation. Coupling this with commitment to a specific budget level before the major program levels were determined would, they argued, compound the difficulty of balancing cuts with increases in major domestic and social programs. Mondale was out of Washington, campaigning for Democratic midterm candidates, when Carter let Blumenthal and congressional leaders persuade him to commit himself to a 1980 deficit of "$30 billion or less." Mondale, Eizenstat and McIntyre still regret it, though McIntyre went through the motions of agreeing with it after Carter said he was determined to do it. Blumenthal, incidentally, urged Carter to state his target in terms of the intended deficit rather than the intended budget total for a reason that's obvious when you think about it but has gone unnoticed. Calling a budget with an expenditure total in the $530-billion range "lean" and "austere" and "tight" would seem absurd. Any conceivable deficit figure would be much lower and therefore more convincing as a target figure. Carter's "$30 billion or less" committed him to a total expenditure between $16 and $20 billion less than it might otherwise have been. A senior advocate of a minimal budget with a minimal deficit remarked the other day, as casually as if he were talking about the weather, that of course the $16-20 billion difference wouldn't have much effect on inflation. The lowest attainable budget with the lowest predictable deficit was important symbolically and psychologically. Economically, he said, it was of minor importance.

Mondale figured in the process more actively than is generally realized. He attended many of the key meetings, and most of Carter's appeals sessions and other discussions with department and agency heads. He was in frequent touch with McIntyre and frequently differed with him both on program levels and on procedure. He felt and argued strongly, for instance, that Carter let McIntyre take OMB much farther and deeper into judging programs and imposing its judgments on departments and agencies than it should have been allowed to go. OMB, Mondale told Carter and McIntyre, simply was not equipped in either numbers or competence to substitute its program judgments for those of experienced department and agency administrators. On this point he agreed with and delighted such department and agency heads as HEW Secretary Joseph Califano, Interior's Cecil Andrus and NASA's Robert Frosch. McIntyre justified OMB's expanded judgmental role as follows: "We tried to look at the effectiveness of various programs and their effectiveness at various funding levels in making our decisions this year. We did not make cuts just for the sake of making cuts. We all understood that we had to make reductions, but we tried to make reductions on programmatic grounds, for valid reasons, based upon our evaluation of the effectiveness of programs."

One of the fiercest of the many OMB-agency confrontations that resulted from this approach occurred with HEW. Its initial request, calling for total expenditures (including Social Security and related benefits) of $198.2 billion, was submitted to OMB on September 15. OMB, responding November 30, chopped the total by two billion dollars and reallocated funds among HEW programs on a wholesale scale. Califano and Under Secretary Hale Champion, a California state budgeter who'd never been popular at OMB and the White House anyhow, were enraged. Califano on December 5 responded with appeals from 137 OMB decisions and a memorandum accusing OMB among other things of excessively invading the department's discretionary functions and selling out the poor. At a meeting December 7 with Associate Director Suzanne Woolsey, who had been an HEW budget analyst before she went to OMB, Champion blew his top. He accused her, her professional staff and her superiors, McIntyre and Bowman Cutter, of substituting their judgment for his and his professional staff's. He literally roared that OMB's proper function was to tell him and Califano how much they could spend on programs that they controlled—Social Security outlays, by far the biggest HEW costs, are mandated by law—and then let *them* decide how to spend the money.

What is described at both OMB and HEW as "a miraculous change" soon occurred. McIntyre's senior budget deputy, Bowman Cutter, moved in and—to Califano's and Champion's astonishment—actually read the massive file they had submitted in response to

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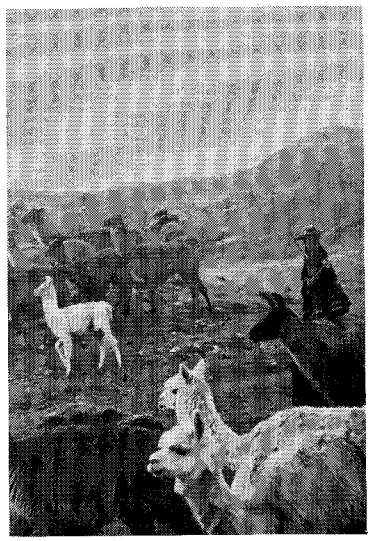

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the OMB cuts and reallocations. McIntyre, Cutter and Woolsey granted Califano and Champion a good deal of the discretionary power they thought they'd been denied. In the end, OMB restored about half the $2 billion cut in 1980 expenditures and $2.5 billion of $4.1 billion cut from authority to spend in 1980 and future years.

There were some interesting divergences in the explanations of why and how this happened. Champion put it down mostly to his explosion. Califano suspected that Senator Edward Kennedy's savage attack on Carter priorities at the Democratic party's midterm assembly in Memphis, the weekend after HEW protested the OMB cuts, jarred and frightened OMB and Carter. McIntyre's and Califano's impressions of what OMB had conceded were drastically different. Califano considered that OMB had surrendered on the issue of who decides how to spend allotted funds. McIntyre considered that he had told Califano and Champion in no uncertain terms exactly where they could and could not spend the restored funds. December 15, the day of HEW's formal appeal to Carter, Califano asked the President to overrule McIntyre on only two issues. One was a request that Congress rescind an increase of $300 million that it voted last year in health funds. The other was OMB's refusal to allot $37 million for a child-care research facility that Califano and members of the Kennedy family passionately wanted. Carter let HEW keep the $300 million, denied it the $37 million. OMB officials present at the appeals session said they were slightly revolted by Califano's lavish assurances to Carter that he, Califano, thought the President had treated HEW very well indeed. They waited with interest to see whether Califano would say as much to Senator Kennedy and other advocates of more money for social programs.

John Osborne

Two foreign policy camps prepare for a vicious game of "Lessons of Iran."

High Noon

Ayatollah Khomeini is preparing to return from exile as this is being written. Iran is facing its hour of maximum crisis, a kind of middle-eastern High Noon. By the time you read this, Khomeini's people may be running the country. Or they may all be dead or in jail as a result of a pro-shah military coup. Iran may be ablaze in civil war and in danger of disintegrating as a nation, creating opportunities for Soviet intervention. It is even conceivable that Iran's contending parties could be working out their differences peacefully. Not only Iran's future is in the balance, however. We seem to be approaching High Noon in Washington, too, between contending schools of American foreign policy. For weeks, they have been jabbing at each other with fingers of blame in a contest everyone is now calling, "Who lost Iran?" Within weeks, depending on how things work out, one side or the other may be declaring victory in a new contest—"the Lessons of Iran"—and claiming the right to set the future course of American foreign policy.

Before sorting out where each side stands, it is important to note some lessons of the Iran crisis that seem indisputable regardless what happens there and which side is vindicated in the US debate. The US never should have agreed to limit its sources of information to pro-shah elements in Iran and to avoid contacts with opposition groups. Now, to avoid being surprised again, we should end such arrangements in other countries where they exist. For example, since 1974, when diplomatic relations were resumed, the US has severely restrained its information gathering in Egypt so as not to offend President Anwar Sadat. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger apparently agreed initially to restrict the size of the CIA station in Egypt to assure Sadat there would be no new internal meddling of a type that took place during the Nasser era. US policy since then has been so restrictive, however, that military attachés are confined to official liaison duties with the Egyptian military and forbidden to seek what information they can in the ranks. Diplomatic officials do mix socially with Cairo's Marxist intellectuals, but they are not allowed to contact such sources of potential trouble as the right-wing Muslim Brotherhood. Congressional sources say that US embassy officials stay away from Communists in Italy and Japan, and information gathering also seems to be limited in Saudi Arabia. The US reportedly does no covert intelligence collecting in Israel, either, for fear of having its sources exposed by friends of Israel in the US government.

Other lessons of Iran surely are that US diplomats and intelligence agencies must be more sensitive than they have been to social and economic developments in other countries. Iran's stability was undone as much by urbanization, inflation and social dislocation as by rage against the shah. The CIA is rather late in beginning to study implications of the fundamentalism sweeping the Muslim world. It is true that students, religious groups and the military are hard to gather information about first-hand, but the US has to make more of an effort. We need to expand and improve information analysis at the CIA and elsewhere. But the White House also has to be willing to listen to bad news about its favorite

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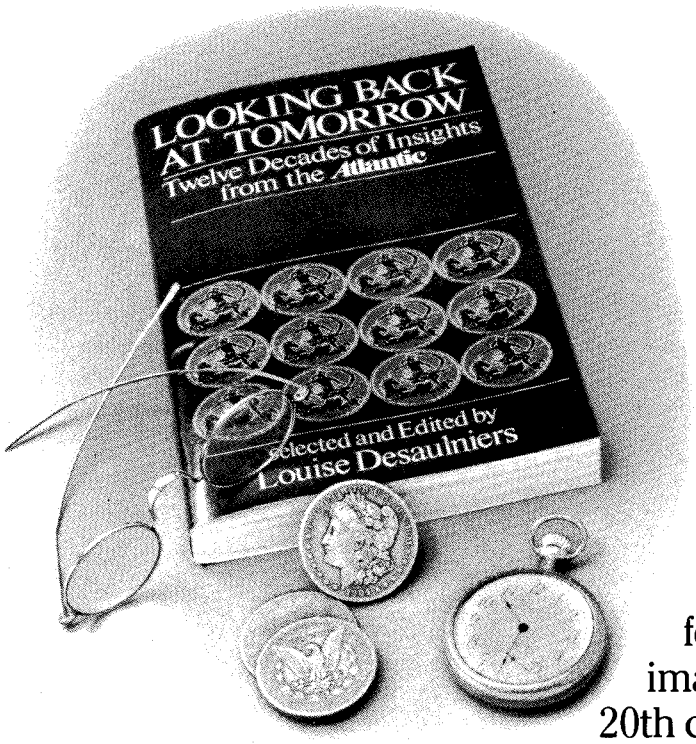

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regimes, as apparently was not the case with the shah's regime in Iran.

Some other lessons concern public diplomacy. An open administration is a welcome relief after years of secrecy, but it can be carried too far. President Carter has made a point of publicly blessing the shah, and then the shah's appointed interim government, of publicly condemning Khomeini and then appealing to him. None of it has worked. US blessings are not necessarily influential in Iran. Carter's appeals and condemnations have been so counterproductive that it's downright embarrassing. The president should have stated what *principles* the US supported—peace, democracy, stability—and kept quiet about personalities.

But all of these factors are tactical. When "Lessons of Iran" is played in earnest, the issue will be one of strategy. The captain of one side—call it the Hang Tough team—is Henry Kissinger. Ironically, he used to be leader of the other side—the Detentists, now led by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance—but he switched after leaving office. Kissinger is so articulate and smart that he seems to become the principal voice of whatever school he joins. Now he is arguing (as he did in an interview with *Time* magazine) that the crisis in Iran is part of a "progressive collapse of pro-Western governments" which can be arrested only "by a firm, purposeful and consistent American policy" that involves "imposing penalties and risks" on Soviet advances. Kissinger believes that the Soviets are responsible for Iran's oil worker strikes and that a Khomeini-dominated Islamic Republic would be radical, allied with Iraq and Libya and anti-Western, if not openly pro-Soviet. Kissinger does not say what the US should be doing in Iran, but his record as secretary of state was one of total support for the shah and he has criticized the Carter administration for pressuring the king to ease up on his dictatorial control of Iran.

Kissinger has many influential allies. Columnist Joseph Kraft has been calling for the United States to unleash the Iranian military for a coup, and he has been accusing the administration of being "flabby" and "goody-goody" for not doing so. Irving Kristol argued in *The Wall Street Journal* that "the world is just not now of a mind to give birth to new liberal-constitutional regimes" and said he thinks it is time to abandon "decadent Wilsonianism" in foreign policy (characterized by legalism, idealism and "guilt") and shift to a new "national interest" approach, by which the US would employ the CIA, the military—whatever it takes—to get its way. "The nations of the world admire winners, not losers—not even nice losers," Kristol wrote. Most of the Republican party seems to be on this side of the great foreign policy divide. Some "moderate" Democrats of the Jackson-Moynihan stripe proclaim a dedication to democracy in the third world; but when it comes to real choosing, they opt for "realism." Columnists Evans and Novak and William Safire are ever-available as conduits for leaks from the Hang Tough team, and George Will will give its outlook a high intellectual gloss from his well-worn copy of Barlett's Quotations.

Within the administration, the Hang Tough approach is championed by Energy Secretary James Schlesinger and President Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski. Both of them have as their first foreign policy priority assuring US advantage over the Soviet Union. On Iran, Brzezinski originally favored absolute US support for the shah and continuation of the Kissinger-era policy of having no contact with the shah's opponents. Since the king's departure on "vacation," Brzezinski reportedly has been the chief advocate of undiluted US support for the shah's annointed successor, Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiar. It was Brzezinski's influence, according to administration officials, that prevented the US from having direct contacts with Khomeini up to the moment of his planned return to Iran.

On the other side, Cyrus Vance, the State Department bureaucracy and some liberal Democrats in Congress are holding to the old verities of detente and Trilateralism: that US-Soviet rivalry is only one facet of the modern world, and should be kept under control. Vance says that the Kissinger-Brzezinski outlook in the Mideast-to-Africa "arc of crisis"—that is, it's Soviets win, we lose—is "overly simplistic." Vance argues for steadiness, restraint, understanding, cooperation. He and his aides usually oppose naked displays of American power; at the same time, they seem less fearful that the US is perceived as powerless. In Iran, Vance favored distancing the US from the shah and trying to encourage negotiation between all the contending forces. His State Department subordinates established contacts with opposition leaders, including aides to Khomeini, and have been looking for solutions in Iran beyond the Bakhtiar government.

The great mystery figure in the administration is Defense Secretary Harold Brown, who is a member of the highest-level inner council making administration

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•

The Moral Problem of Refugees.

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policy on Iran, but who has given not the slightest public hint of what he personally favors. One indication of Brown's position, though, is the role being played in Iran by US Air Force General Robert E. Huyser. Huyser ostensibly is there to consult on weapons-purchase matters, but his chief task reportedly has been to keep the Iranian military unified so that it can act concertedly when and if it chooses to act. Since the top level of Iran's officer corps is devotedly pro-shah and probably fears being purged in the event of a Khomeini takeover, the effect of Huyser's mission is to keep the option open for the United States to encourage a military coup.

Should President Carter authorize a military coup? With Khomeini on the verge of returning to Iran, the pressures from each side must be enormous. The shah surely has been urging Carter to give a go-ahead, so that the military could take charge, suppress the opposition and restore him to his throne. A successful coup would prove to Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt and other US allies that President Carter is capable of decisive action, much as President Eisenhower was in returning the shah to power in 1953. Any coup attempt, successful or unsuccessful, will be blamed on the United States anyway, so why shouldn't the US do what it can to make an attempt successful (while denying it played any role at all, of course)? On the other hand, a coup would have to be terribly brutal because the anti-shah opposition in Iran includes practically every element of society. How many would have to be killed? Thousands, certainly, and, for that, the military might not be able to hold together. Carter's conscience, presumably, would urge him against authorizing a coup. So would Vance and other State Department professionals, whose case is that Khomeini, however obscurantist, however bigoted, would still be anti-Soviet and would need to sell oil to the West.

A disastrous outcome for the US in Iran—a leftist takeover, especially—is bound to produce a shift in US policy-making influence toward the Hang Tough group, at the expense of the moderates. We are likely to see most restraint taken off the CIA's covert operators—as well as its intelligence-gatherers—and a step-up in tension between the US and the Soviet Union. Further damage will be done to the chances for Senate ratification of a SALT treaty with the Soviets. Some "favorable" outcomes could produce similar results. A US-backed bloody coup producing the shah's return would signal that hanging tough had won the day in Washington. The only hope for the moderates to be vindicated would seem to lie in a negotiated compromise leading to elections and a stable government. It is worth hoping for and worth the administration's working for. We should know reasonably soon whether it's possible to be nice and a winner, too.

Morton Kondracke

On the Hill.

Blind Iowa

The new Republican senator from Iowa, Roger Jepsen, is the very model of the fresh-faced conservative. An obscure, reactionary former lieutenant governor, he toppled a nationally prominent liberal incumbent, Democrat Dick Clark, with the help of mass-mail king Richard Viguerie and the support of the anti-abortion movement. In doing so, he changed overnight the moderate-to-liberal pattern of recent Iowa politics.

During the campaign, most voters knew Jepsen simply by the description, "a Davenport businessman." Details of what he actually did for a living were hazy at best, and Jepsen himself was evasive and sometimes contradictory about his financial dealings. Jepsen still refuses to answer questions, saying he wants first to disentangle himself from the business and lawsuits he instituted. But a portrait of how Jepsen earned a living and what had happened over the past three years can be pieced together from public and private sources.

When Jepsen left the lieutenant governorship in 1972, after an abortive intra-party challenge to moderate Republican Governor Robert Ray, he went back into his previous business of selling insurance. In 1975, Jepsen had a brainstorm and set out with two associates to sell something with great emotional freight but little practical use: insurance against total, accidental blindness in both eyes. They called their business the National Eye Care Association. A $10 annual membership in NECA would pay $75,000 in the event of total, accidental blindness (not including blindness resulting from disease, military injuries or self-inflicted wounds). Membership would bring other benefits such as car rental discounts, vitamins at wholesale prices and advice on eyewear fashions. NECA would advertise, urging the public to visit an optometrist; the optometrists, in turn, would sell NECA memberships in their reception rooms and pay a fee to NECA to participate in the program. As a business venture, NECA was potentially lucrative, since the odds against total, accidental blindness are extremely long.

Jepsen and his partners set up a parent company, the Healthy Eyes Program Corporation, and raised $450,000 from 35 investors. They sold stock to themselves for one dollar a share and to others for two dollars a share. By limiting the stock offering to 35 investors, the company avoided having to meet the detailed public reporting requirements of state and federal securities regulators. Another regulatory hurdle, approval of the insurance policy, was cleared by applying in Illinois, where Jepsen had been told regulations covering group insurance plans are among the most lax in the nation. Once Illinois approved the policy, written by a Montgomery Ward subsidiary,

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approval from states with stricter standards, such as Iowa, was a certainty.

Jepsen knew from the outset that NECA was a high-risk venture. He had in hand, early in 1976, a professional consultant's study, warning him that NECA should be abandoned unless it could obtain the official approval of the American Optometric Association. He had been told by his consultants and former AOA officials that the association's sanction would be difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. In the end, it was indeed impossible. The firm's memorandum to potential investors, however, made no mention of the existence of the consultant's report or the pitfalls that lay ahead, and dealt instead in the general language provided by Jepsen's securities lawyers.

Jepsen took several seemingly clever steps to promote his new business. He gave the National Eye Care Association a published list of goals almost identical to the purposes of the Optometrists Association itself, namely the promotion of good vision and of the profession of optometry. He persuaded prominent optometrists, including several former presidents of the AOA, to invest in the company. And in what he thought was a stroke of genius, he got a well known blind man to serve as president of NECA.

The blind man was Kenneth Jernigan, a shrewd, tough Iowa state official who had long served as both director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind and president of a private organization called the National Federation of the Blind. He continued in both positions while acting as president of Jepsen's outfit.

It was Jernigan who provided the firm's public debut. On April 25, 1977, a week before NECA began its Iowa sales campaign, Jernigan appeared on NBC's "Today Show" and dropped NECA's name, although he did not mention that it was a profit-making venture or that he was its president. Soon NECA was awash in controversy. Over Jepsen's objection that as a private businessman he didn't have to answer questions from the press, a series of articles in the *Des Moines Register* spelled out the nature of NECA and Jernigan's involvement. The old professional feud between opthalmologists and optometrists sprang to life, and the optometrists became chary. Organizations that had long opposed Jernigan's autocratic manner and tie-in-the-mail fund raising began taking shots at NECA.

As a result of this bad publicity, even though Jepsen had managed to sign up a third of Iowa's optometrists to participate in NECA, after two months of operation only 532 memberships had been sold. On June 30, 1977, the parent company reported losses for the fiscal year of $253,896.

In mid-August 1977, with NECA's balance sheet looking increasingly grim, Jepsen's lawyers filed the first in a series of lawsuits against non-profit organizations involved in work with the blind, charging that they had conspired to destroy NECA because of their hatred of Kenneth Jernigan. The first suit was filed against the National Accreditation Council, a New York-based organization that accredits agencies serving blind persons. Other defendants in the suits are the American Foundation for the Blind, the Minneapolis Society for the Blind, the Affiliated Leadership League of and for the Blind of America and the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind. The last of the lawsuits, which now seek a total of $50 million in damages, was filed three weeks after Jepsen's election to the Senate. The suits charge that the organizations tried to ruin NECA by distributing the articles in the *Des Moines Register*, together with other materials. Jepsen and his associates have not sued the *Register* itself.

By the fall of 1977, it had become obvious that, even with changes in its marketing practices, NECA was in trouble. Montgomery Ward backed out. Optometrists who had invested in the company, stung by the bad publicity, told Jepsen to take back their shares. Jepsen, the only paid operating officer the National Eye Care Association ever had, says he quit paying himself his $36,000 salary in July, 1978, months after NECA had gone dormant and three months after his entrance in the Senate race. In September 1978, the firm's lawyers said in court papers, NECA ceased all activities except for filing lawsuits.

During the Senate campaign, it was reported that Jepsen had served as a conduit for a $5000 loan from Jernigan—who resigned his state position early in 1978 and moved to Baltimore—to a former Iowa state employee who had worked at the commission for the blind. The former employee claimed the money was an attempt to buy his silence concerning strange goings-on at the blind commission. These included electronic eavesdropping, stacks of money in safes and, incredibly, an effort by Jernigan to turn the commission offices into an arsenal, complete with weapons, ammunition and bulletproof windows.

Jepsen admitted that he had signed for the $5000 loan with money provided by Jernigan, but said he had acted only out of friendship for Jernigan, that he knew nothing of an attempt to buy the man's silence, and that he had never asked why the money was being funneled through him. The loan, however, was a political embarrassment. Furthermore, it had not been reported on the finanical disclosure statement all Senate candidates are required to file. Jepsen filed an amended disclosure, while maintaining that the whole matter was a political smear by Clark.

Jepsen was also obliged to amend during the campaign his previous financial disclosure statements concerning other loans and property holdings, including a $35,000 commercial loan he had obtained and lent in turn to his campaign, a matter Jepsen initially said was none of the public's business. Former Senator Dick Clark, as it happens, was a leading force behind the adoption of many of the disclosure requirements Jepsen found troublesome.

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Victory at the polls, Jepsen contended, vindicated his position that nothing was politically or morally wrong with the way he conducted his campaign and financial affairs. The business and the lawsuits linger on, though. Jepsen said he planned to leave them behind when he entered the Senate, but it has not been easy to escape what he created. Jepsen's lawyers have made some attempts to settle the lawsuits, but the defendants have shown no inclination to sell out cheap and appear to be savoring the discovery proceedings the suits have afforded them. Jepsen refuses to discuss the company, its past, its current condition, its future, whether he intends to repay the patients and optometrists who bought NECA memberships or what hope investors have of seeing their money again.

John Hyde

John Hyde is a reporter in the Washington Bureau of the *Des Moines Register and Tribune.*

Buses are the next promising target for deregulation.

The Homely Sister

Last year, turning a deaf ear to the pleadings of the nation's airlines, the Carter administration deregulated the airline industry. This year, ignoring similar cries from trucking firms, it has begun to focus its attention on deregulating trucking. Now it is being forced to consider yet another segment of the transportation industry: commercial buses. Unlike their brethren in air and truck traffic, the nation's principal bus companies say they welcome deregulation and will not be satisfied until they get it. Trailways president J. Kevin Murphy opened the campaign with a speech on November 13 before the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners in which he called for "total deregulation." His principal rival, Greyhound, seconded the idea.

The airlines industry is the glamor girl of the transportation sector; buses are her homely sister. Unlike the deregulation of the airline industry, bus deregulation has been almost totally ignored by the nation's press. This neglect can be blamed partly on the relatively small size of the intercity bus industry: the nation's bus companies have annual revenues of only about $1.3 billion, compared to $20 billion for the airlines. But there are class elements at work also. The price of an airline ticket means something to the people who operate newspapers, magazines and television networks, since they fly frequently. The price of a bus ticket means next to nothing, since most of them wouldn't ride a bus at bayonet point. The editors of *Time* put airline deregulation on the cover of their magazine; they are not likely to give the same publicity to bus deregulation.

Buses are the transportation of the lower classes. More than a fourth of all intercity bus passengers come from households earning $5000 or less; four-fifths come from households earning less than the median national income. Buses also attract more than their share of the young and old: more than a third of the passengers are under 25, and more than a sixth are over 65. Women, students, racial minorities, manual laborers and people with little education are all disproportionately represented on buses. Many people ride buses because they are too young, too infirm or too poor to use a car. Rural Americans also rely heavily on intercity buses; buses now serve 15,000 communities, 14,000 of which have no other form of commercial transportation. (Amtrak, by comparison, serves only about 500 communities; the airlines only about 700.) Low fares and extensive routes are the principal attraction of bus travel. But buses have their drawbacks, and most people who can travel any other way prefer to do so. Trains and planes offer better service and more comfortable accommodations. Cars offer greater freedom. But all of these cost substantially more to operate than the lowly bus.

The Carter administration, which has grown used to having to force regulatory reform down the throats of the companies affected by such changes, casts a rather wary eye on the unusual demands of the nation's two biggest bus companies. "Greyhound and Trailways invented deregulation three weeks ago, and we want to see what they want before we do anything," says Mary Schuman, a White House aide on transportation. Getting a deregulation bill through Congress would not be easy, since it would be strenuously opposed by two groups—state and local officials who want to retain state control over buses, mainly to force companies to continue unprofitable service to small towns; and small regional bus firms, which fear that, stripped of their regulatory protection, they would be driven out of business by Greyhound and Trailways. Despite its cautious attitude, the Carter administration has begun to lay the groundwork for deregulation. An interagency task force has been studying bus regulation and is expected to send a report to the president within a week or two recommending some changes. Several branches of the administration, including the Federal Trade Commission, the Justice Department and the Council on Wage-Price Stability, have filed briefs with the Interstate Commerce Commission, which regulates the industry, supporting four Trailways petitions which would partially deregulate the industry. The petitions ask that bus companies be allowed to change rates and to begin or end service on particular routes

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without prior ICC approval. These changes would apply to regular passenger service, charters and small package delivery (a growing segment of the industry). Right now all fare changes—up or down—must be filed in advance with the ICC and approved, which normally takes at least 30 days. Firms that want to start or drop service on given routes also have to receive approval from the ICC (and frequently from state regulatory agencies as well); here, though, the proceedings can take months or years and refusals are common. These requirements generally shield bus companies from competition, but in exchange for this protection the firms have to provide service on many sparsely-traveled and thus unprofitable routes.

Greyhound and Trailways have decided that the price is too high. At first glance this sentiment is surprising, since they overwhelmingly dominate the industry: between them they account for more than 60 percent of all intercity bus revenues. Why do these two giants want to change the rules that have apparently been so good to them? Even while retaining their dominance, both have suffered declines in passengers, revenues and profit margins. The bus industry, which was healthy during the 1960s, had its best year ever in 1971, and has declined sharply since. The OPEC oil embargo, which forced many travelers out of their cars and onto commercial buses, provided the industry a record number of passengers in 1974, but even that was not enough to offset its rising costs. Bus companies have taken the worst beating on their regular-route service; these losses have been only partly covered by the expanding charter and package services.

Competition from Amtrak, the federally-subsidized passenger train corporation, has cut into bus revenues. The bus companies rightly complain that this competition is unfair, since Amtrak charges fares well below cost on all of its routes and has the freedom to cut them whenever it wants. If Amtrak didn't get huge federal subsidies, it wouldn't stand a chance against the cheaper, more efficient buses.

Aside from worrying about these foreboding trends, Trailways and Greyhound have their own special motives in pressing for deregulation. Compared to any other bus company, Trailways is a giant, but next to Greyhound it is a dwarf. Greyhound runs twice as many miles as Trailways, carries nearly three times as many passengers and has two-and-a-half times the revenues. Greyhound gobbles up 44 percent of all industry revenues; Trailways is a distant second with 18 percent. (Greyhound, incidentally, is the only truly national bus company: Trailways consists of Trailways, Inc. and 14 affiliated regional carriers that operate under different names but have a consolidated management.) "Greyhound has the purest transportation monopoly around," says Trailways spokesman Ted Knappen. He says Trailways's problem is that it has to compete with Greyhound on almost all of its routes, while Greyhound has many lucrative routes where it has no competition. Given more freedom to compete, Trailways officials think, they could make substantial gains against their bigger rival.

Greyhound disagrees. The company may publicly support deregulation because it would look bad to oppose more competition when a smaller competitor has endorsed it. But Greyhound also thinks deregulation might be in its own interest, since it would permit the firm to drop some bad routes.

From the point of view of the public, there are good reasons to cut back federal and state regulation of bus traffic. Current regulations have probably kept bus fares above what they would be in a competitive environment. If Trailways wants to undercut Greyhound (or vice versa) by cutting all of its fares tomorrow, it can't. First it must file the new rates with the ICC, giving its rival ample warning. Under normal market conditions, Greyhound would tend to keep its rates down to prevent being undercut by surprise; under the current rules, it can wait until Trailways files a request for a lower rate and then follow suit. On many of their routes bus companies have no competition at all, leaving little incentive to keep fares down. Deregulation would create competition on some of these routes.

Deregulation probably would have roughly the same effects on the intercity bus industry it had on the airline industry, where lower fares boosted the number of passengers so much that the airlines could barely handle them all. All the new business gave the industry record-breaking profits last year. On the average, commercial buses now run only one-third to one-half full. Lower fares probably would help to fill them up. Trailways says that whenever it has cut fares during promotional campaigns it has gotten sharp increases in passengers. Deregulation proved to be the best thing that ever happened to the airline industry, which up until then had been in rather bad shape; it would probably also revive the bus industry.

The administration's task force worries that deregulation might lead to an even more complete domination of the industry by Greyhound and Trailways. Both have advantages over smaller firms. They have nationally known names and reputations, more experience in marketing and promotion, better knowledge of markets and greater financial resources. Along with aggressive efforts to expand into new areas, these advantages might enable the two giants to drive many small companies out of business. In some cases they might simply buy up potential competitors. It therefore might be wise for the Justice Department to strictly scrutinize such mergers, at least for a couple of years. The ICC also might limit the number of new routes a carrier could add in any given year.

But even if Greyhound and Trailways were able to increase their respective shares of intercity bus traffic, they wouldn't be able to enjoy the benefits one

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normally associates with a monopoly. In the first place, boosting fares would induce many bus passengers to find more pleasant ways—cars, trains and planes—to get where they want to go. In the second place, any excess profits would attract new competitors, since the barriers to entry into the bus industry are very low. Capital requirements are minimal: used buses go for about $25,000, new ones for about $100,000. And bus passengers are economy-minded. They appear to choose bus lines mostly on the basis of price, ignoring less tangible differences of the sort airlines place so much emphasis on.

The biggest obstacle to any deregulation efforts is the problem of service to those 14,000 towns that have no other commercial transportation. Most state and local officials can be expected to demand that such service be continued no matter what the cost. This causes the White House some hesitation. "We want to be sure that deregulation is a good idea if we're going to get into a fray with every governor and every mayor in the country," Schuman says. The existing regulatory system has only slowed the bus companies' termination of service to some small towns, not stopped it. In the past eight years 1800 communities have lost their bus service.

It's hard to know how many of the routes serving small towns would be dropped if buses were deregulated. Many routes that are unprofitable by themselves would be kept because they feed passengers onto other, profitable routes. If either a state or the federal government wants to guarantee service on those routes that would be dropped, it should provide direct subsidies instead of requiring firms to overcharge passengers on some lines to subsidize those on others. The direct method would be cheaper and fairer.

President Carter most likely will postpone any comprehensive bus deregulation effort until after the administration has made some progress on the deregulation of railroads and trucking. Given the relative size and importance of these sectors, that is probably the right approach. But one hopes he doesn't postpone action more than a few months. Any time a president has the opportunity to simultaneously promote competition, bolster a sagging industry and cut prices to consumers, he should grab it.

Stephen Chapman

How American oil companies helped Ian Smith get around the United States embargo of Rhodesia.

American Oilgate

by Stan Luxenberg

When the white minority regime of Rhodesia announced its unilateral declaration of independence from Britain in November 1965, many observers thought the rebels were fools. British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, angered by the breakaway colony's refusal to grant rights to the black majority, had threatened to cut off oil supplies. In a matter of months, it was thought, Ian Smith's new government would collapse.

But in Rhodesia, service stations continued pumping gas. And even though in the next year and a half all members of the United Nations except South Africa and Portugal joined in banning sales of oil to the illegal regime, somehow the supplies never stopped. Indeed, until the recent conflict in Iran threatened to disrupt the flow, the Rhodesian government could always count on adequate stores of petroleum products to run its economy and fuel the helicopters and troop transports it has used to fight its guerrilla war.

For years African leaders demanded to know where the oil was coming from. Last September they received an official answer. The British government published the report of a commission headed by Thomas Bingham which found that Shell and British Petroleum had secretly been aiding Rhodesia through intermediaries and that the British government cooperated with the scheme. The Bingham report caused a sensation in the British press which dubbed the scandal "oilgate."

What little attention the "oilgate" scandal got in the United States consisted of repeating the revelations about British oil companies and reporting the reaction

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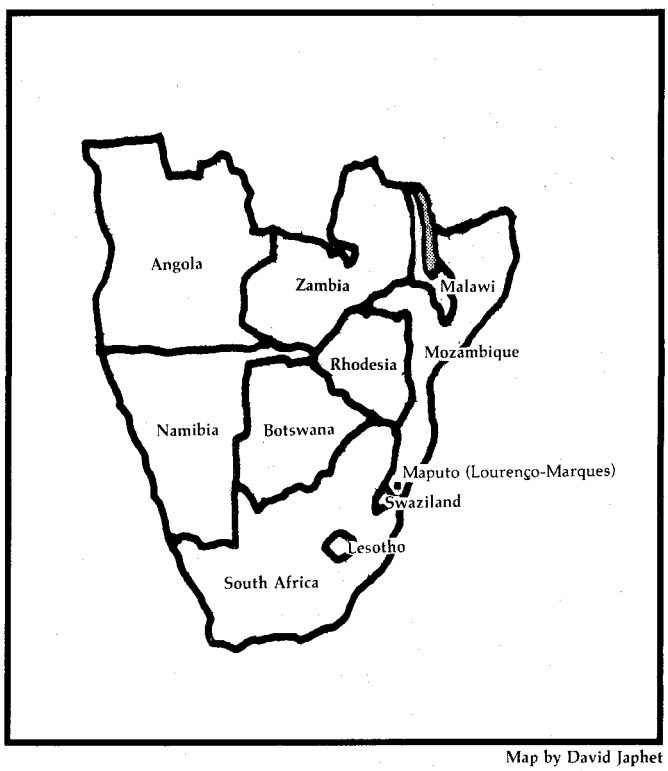
to them in Britain. But there is an obvious American side to the story, which the American press and government have been laggard in nailing down. The Bingham Report and other public evidence indicate that American-based companies were just as willing as the British ones to help Rhodesia to evade the sanctions. By doing so, these companies are partly responsible for the survival of the Smith regime, and for the current violence that a quick return to British control might have avoided.

One of the two British journalists whose writings last year forced the British government to release the Bingham report actually produced much of the evidence against the big oil companies three years ago in Washington. In the US the revelations provoked little response. Bernard Rivers's original report, called "The Oil Conspiracy," charged that despite the official embargo by their parent-country governments, subsidiaries of five multinational oil corporations had conspired to supply Rhodesia. The companies were Mobil, Caltex (a subsidiary of Texaco and Standard Oil of California), BP (part owned by the British government), Shell and Total (controlled by the French government). What's more, Rivers said, the British government knew about the elaborate schemes the companies had devised to keep their operations secret.

Prompted by these charges, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's subcommittee on Africa held hearings in September 1976. A spokesman for Mobil told the committee that the company's South African subsidiary claimed it was not supplying Rhodesia. He said that Mobil had no way to check this, since the South African Official Secrets Act forbids anyone—even the corporate parent—from seeking information about oil shipments in South Africa. If a Mobil representative so much as asked a South African employee whether oil was going to Rhodesia, the American interrogator could be imprisoned. In short, Mobil claimed, it was powerless to investigate its wholly owned subsidiary, or to prevent it from breaking American law. Stymied by this peculiar explanation, the Senate committee dropped the matter. A Treasury Department investigation was similarly abortive. (Yet the Bingham committee proved two years later, by applying greater pressure than the American investigators ever applied to Mobil, that the South African Official Secrets Act did not stop British Petroleum from knowing in great detail how its local subsidiary was sneaking oil into Rhodesia.)

The American press, never particularly concerned about the question of sanctions against Britain's former colony, published several articles about the 1976 charges, then lost interest. British publications were unmoved by Rivers's 1976 report which focused primarily on Mobil, an American company. The issue died until Rivers and a colleague, Martin Bailey, helped resurrect it with articles in the British press last year.

Bingham did not reach any conclusions about Mobil and Caltex, because once again the companies declined to supply records and the investigators could only force British companies to cooperate. But the Bingham report does contain evidence about the American corporations as well as Total, and includes testimony from many witnesses who say that the five multinationals were all involved.



Map by David Japhet

Even so, the American press again has paid little attention to the subject. The State Department said it saw no reason to investigate further. Last year before the Bingham report was released, Senate staff members talked to some of the people who provided Bingham with damning testimony. But there now seems little likelihood the Senate will reopen hearings. Senator Dick Clark, who chaired the Africa subcommittee and provided much of the impetus for the investigation, was defeated in last year's election. Senator Frank Church, who recently became chairman of the full Foreign Relations committee, has given priority to other matters. In December, however, the Treasury Department, whose earlier investigation was confined to narrow legal questions, said it planned to reopen the case.

Before it declared independence Rhodesia got most of its crude oil by a pipeline extending from the port of Beira in Mozambique. In December 1965 the multinationals, in response to the sanctions law, duly shut the pipeline. This closing, the Bingham report notes, was "perhaps the only major victory won by the oil sanctions policy."

Immediately the oil began to flow again—this time across the Rhodesian-South African border. At first the operation was haphazard. Trucks with "Oil for Rhodesia" chalked on their sides and bearing Rhodesian flags began pulling into South African service stations

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to fill up with 1000 to 2000 gallons of gasoline. Some of the truckers were South Africans or Rhodesians determined to do their bit to break the sanctions. Others were contractors out to make a quick killing as prices in Rhodesia climbed.

The Rhodesian government, the Bingham report says, instructed Caltex Rhodesia (owned by Texaco and Standard of California) to procure oil supplies. The company borrowed a district manager from the Johannesburg office of Caltex Oil South Africa who was familiar with the area of South Africa adjacent to Rhodesia and who spoke Afrikaans. Tapping every possible source in the region, he set up a system that funneled supplies to a point near the Rhodesian border where they could be trucked across. The Caltex employee also arranged to put a Rhodesian contractor in charge of a service station in South Africa. Fuel was then shipped to the contractor by rail and then transferred to trucks which took it to Caltex depots over the border. In some cases Caltex paid exhorbitant prices for the oil products it purchased from contractors. The Rhodesian government later reimbursed the company for its extra costs.

On February 5, 1966, the *Rand Daily Mail*, after observing the Beit Bridge on the South African-Rhodesian border, reported that three to four vehicles a day with fuel supplies were making the crossing. On February 16, the newspaper estimated that 35,000 gallons of fuel were reaching Rhodesia a day. By May the figure was 100,000 gallons. After that the road traffic tapered off as railroads carried most of the cargo. The road transport was not able to meet all of Rhodesia's needs, but it helped the country survive the crucial opening months of the sanctions.

To create a smoother delivery system than the trucks could provide, the Rhodesian government set up a company called GENTA, which was responsible for purchasing supplies from the South African subsidiaries of the five multinationals and channeling them to the Rhodesian subsidiaries.

Under this arrangement, most of the Rhodesian oil was then shipped by rail or sea from South African refineries to the Mozambique rail yards at Lourenço Marques, now called Maputo. From there it was taken by rail to Rhodesia. To hide this traffic the oil companies used middlemen. In the first several years of the sanctions most of the oil was sold by the South African subsidiaries of the multinationals to a South African company called Parry Leon and Hayhoe, which sold the oil to GENTA, which sold it to the Rhodesian subsidiaries of these same multinationals.

This way there was no record of how the oil companies were importing the oil into Rhodesia. One of the internal company documents obtained by Rivers explains why Mobil South Africa (MOSA) and Mobil Rhodesia (MOSR) felt the subterfuge was necessary. "This paper chase which costs very little to administer, is done primarily to hide the fact that MOSA is in fact supplying MOSR with products in contravention of U.S. sanctions regulations."

At first the rail cars from Mozambique took the oil back to South Africa on their way to Rhodesia, in order to further conceal its destination. Then in May 1966, GENTA decided it would be more efficient to send tank cars directly from Mozambique to Rhodesia. To do this it needed the cooperation of Jorge Jardim, the most powerful figure in Mozambique, who headed a Mozambican oil marketing company and was the personal representative of Portugal's dictator, Antonio de Oliveria Salazar. Jardim now lives in Portugal. Last June, concerned that Portugal would unfairly be given primary blame for breaking the sanctions, Jardim published a book explaining in detail the role of the oil companies. Throughout much of the period of the sanctions breaking, he says, he kept careful records of all oil passing through Mozambique.

Jardim told the Rhodesians he was willing to allow trains to ship the oil directly into Rhodesia, but he was concerned about how the British would react if they learned their runaway colony was being propped up. To test the waters he had a Mozambique company called Sonarep send 12 tank cars in May directly to Rhodesia. When there was no response from the British, he gave the go-ahead to Total, which sent 15 cars in June. Mobil was next to begin the route, sending 10 cars in August. Jardim coordinated all the shipments, making certain that Mozambique had the fuel it needed before allowing supplies to go to Rhodesia.

According to the Portuguese figures, 2,429 8000-gallon tank cars were sent to Rhodesia from Mozambique in 1966. Of these, 503 came from Mobil and 288 from Caltex, with the rest supplied by Total, Shell and Sonarep. By 1967, the figures had reached 10,796 total cars, with 2000 from Mobil and 1697 from Caltex.

These figures suggest that the companies continued to hold the same shares of the Rhodesian market they had maintained before independence. From 1968 to 1972 the shares of Caltex and Mobil remained fairly steady at about 20 percent apiece. The five multinational subsidiaries in Rhodesia apparently dropped all competition and allowed GENTA to allocate business to insure that each maintained its market share.

In 1967, a Portuguese official told the British ambassador in Lisbon that during the first three months of the year, 85 percent of Rhodesia's oil supplies had come from British and American companies. President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia also said that the British were deliberately permitting oil to pass through. Responding to this information, George Thomson, British Commonwealth secretary, met with representatives of the companies and asked if any British oil was reaching Rhodesia. The companies assured him that to the best of their knowledge there was no leak in the embargo.

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Then in January 1968, the top Shell officials in London learned what lower executives already knew: most shipments to Parry Leon and Hayhoe were going to Rhodesia. Instead of ordering subsidiary executives in South Africa to stop the traffic, Shell devised a scheme to avoid direct involvement with Rhodesia. Under the arrangement Total, the French company, would supply oil to Shell customers who were selling to Rhodesia. Shell would pay for the service by supplying Total's customers in South Africa.

Shell officials informed George Thomson, the Commonwealth secretary, of the oil swap. He approved the deal, he said, because there was no better alternative. Thomson had concluded that the only way to completely stop the Rhodesian oil would be to end all shipments to South Africa and Mozambique. But Britain could ill afford an all-out confrontation with South Africa. If the Rhodesian trade could not be blocked, Thomson said, then at least the companies should make certain British oil was not involved. This was important, he said, because it would allow the United Kingdom's UN representative to say truthfully that no British oil was violating the sanctions Britain itself had sponsored in the international body. When word of the scheme surfaced this year it was a source of extreme embarrassment for the government.

There is no evidence that the American companies participated in this swap. And indeed, because of a loophole in the US version of the sanctions law, they may have felt little need for the extra protection the scheme provided. Under the law adopted by the US, foreign subsidiaries are only subject to the sanctions laws of the country where they operate. This meant that Mobil South Africa would be governed by South African not US law, and South Africa had no sanctions law. Under US regulations only American-based companies or citizens are liable for prosecution for trading or assisting in trade with Rhodesia. By contrast, the US legislation forbidding trade with North Korea, Vietnam and other countries contains no such loophole. Foreign subsidiaries of US companies are forbidden to deal with these other embargoed nations.

Mobil carefully explained the loophole when it testified before the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee in 1976. Mobil's activities in South Africa would violate the embargo of Rhodesia only if US citizens were directly participating in supplying Rhodesia or if products of US origin were being sold. Three US citizens sat on the board of Mobil South Africa, including the president of Mobil's international division. If the Americans, for example, voted to ship oil to Rhodesia, they would be breaking the US law. But Mobil claimed the presence of the Americans on the board was only a formality. They knew little about the company's day-to-day operations and rarely attended board meetings. In any case, Mobil claimed, because of the South African War Measures Act, Americans—even board members—could never learn the ultimate destination of the oil shipments.

This defense seems questionable in light of the Bingham report. BP, it turns out, knew the exact routes of the oil traffic in spite of the South African legislation. The company provided detailed information to the Bingham commission. Perhaps the reason BP was more forthcoming than Mobil is that the British government took a greater interest in the matter than US officials have. In 1977, under pressure from a furious Foreign Secretary David Owen, BP threatened its South African subsidiary with a cutoff of oil if the company did not provide detailed evidence that all sales to Rhodesia had ended. Miraculously, the specific documentation was provided. No one went to jail under the South African Official Secrets Act. Mobil still says it can get no more than vague assurances from its subsidiary.

The story of the sanctions breaking came out only after four years of often frustrating effort by Rivers and his colleagues. Rivers was in Mozambique in 1974 when the Portuguese abandoned the colony. With Portugal's secret police no longer hampering reporters, he was able to determine the bare outlines of how oil was passing through the Mozambican rail yards to Rhodesia. Then he met a former high official of Mobil Rhodesia who explained the secret operation. The executive had internal documents that described the paper chase, but he was reluctant to turn over the material to Rivers, a freelance writer who had little journalistic experience and no organization backing him. Instead, the oilman gave the papers to a South African liberation group, OKHELA, which turned them over to the United Church of Christ's Center for Social Action in the US. The church asked Rivers to write a report using the documents, which it published. The Senate hearings followed shortly after.

Though the hearings attracted little public attention, a copy of Rivers's report did come into the hands of Zambian President Kaunda. The report confirmed what Kaunda had suspected. He is said to have screamed at Ivor Richard, the British UN ambassador, demanding an investigation of the British oil companies. Concerned about relations with black Africa, Foreign Secretary Owen finally authorized the Bingham commission to produce an internal report for the government. In August, worried that the report would never be made public, Rivers and his colleague Martin Bailey obtained some of the documents that BP had supplied Bingham. The journalists took the material to the Sunday *Times* of London, which covered its front page with the revelations. The pressure to

Coming:
Remember the Farmers' Strike?

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publish the Bingham report soon became irresistible.

The rail traffic from Mozambique stopped in 1976 when Mozambique closed its border with Rhodesia in support of the guerrillas fighting the Smith regime. Since then Rhodesian oil has been coming directly from South Africa, most of it originating in Iran. With the Iran flow disrupted and the shah's Moslem opponents threatening to shut off all supplies to South Africa, it is now possible that an oil boycott of Rhodesia finally will become effective. The nations of the West, which could have taken credit for this development, will suffer another global humiliation, this one well deserved.

Memoirs of a reformed civil servant.

My Brief Career as a Bureaucrat

by James North

The first day I went to work as an economist for the Agriculture Department, I was assigned to a nine-by-twelve cubicle, to be shared with my immediate supervisor.

Bob Barnet had a PhD in economics, but was prouder of a pin he had just been awarded marking his 20 years of government service. Barnet showed me the ropes. Once through the technical details, he leaned back and, with the relish of a seasoned veteran, laid out his philosophy of how to succeed in the bureaucracy: please your boss, cover your ass and always, always be cautious. This isn't a university, he told me. I wouldn't be able to switch professors if dissatisfied, and I would *never* get away with challenging my superiors. Patience was the greatest virtue, not performance. The way to get ahead was not to outshine everyone else, but to do precisely what your superiors wanted, prove your absolute loyalty and meanwhile get to know everything you could about the bureaucracy's inner workings.

Barnet followed his own rules to the letter. He arrived early every morning—not to get any work done, but to peruse the desks of everyone else in the office, thus keeping one step ahead of his superiors. He would gleefully fill me in on his findings the moment I arrived, the first wave in a day-long deluge of chatter that made it impossible for either of us to get any work done. I listened to this man eight hours a day, five days a week. My life became a mind-numbing swamp of monologues—held up at my end only by an occasional "oh?" or "really"—about who got what promotion, why it was undeserved, which employees hated each other and why. "That goddam Elizabeth," he would rant, "she's in there with Cobourn [his own boss] every day, pushing her way into everything. You know what she majored in? Art History. She doesn't do anything but dog work, but hell, Cobourn loves to have a good piece of ass around to play up to him." On occasion he would branch out into broader social issues, vilifying blacks, denouncing Arabs, ridiculing liberals. And when he really got going, he would unwind on the details of his adolescent sex life.

Bob's incessant jabbering meant, of course, that he did precious little work. His formal responsibilities were far broader than mine: to review and edit my written reports on price support levels, and to keep tabs on all developments affecting domestic agricultural production. I soon discovered that his idea of keeping tabs consisted of reading *Fortune* magazine and a few routinely distributed DOA circulars. As for passing on my analyses, he concentrated mostly on perfecting my painfully learned bureaucratic jargon.

So at a cost of $15,000 a year to the taxpayers, I slowly cranked out reports that Bob could have (and once had) written if he was not, at a cost of over $30,000 per annum, reading *Time* or disparaging some unsuspecting colleague.

Bob's own supervisor, F. D. Cobourn, posed no threat at all. Neither an economist nor a manager by training, Cobourn was a classic case of the Peter Principle: he had been promoted fairly rapidly until he hit a position he couldn't handle, and there he sat. An introverted man who had once apparently been a fair researcher and writer, he simply could not manage an office. He would grunt hello in the morning and then disappear into his office, where he spent his days rearranging the commas in our reports.

Another figure who came to play a daily role in my life was a $34,000-a-year systems analyst who was either reading the paper or wandering from office to office pestering the rest of us. Karl, Barnet explained with true venom, had been kicked upstairs into a

James North is a pseudonym, as are the other names used in this article.

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deadwood slot rather than fired, and had almost nothing to do.

Then there was the commodities specialist with a passion for sailing, who would spend much of his day on the phone arranging weekend voyages. Whenever I dropped in with specific questions on his speciality, he would launch into a half-hour lecture on general economic conditions, arguing mostly his own political beliefs. Questions about a particular crop would be deflected into general explanations of the country's agricultural output. When I really pressed he would point me to his file cabinet, which contained all manner of classified documents supposedly too sensitive for me to see. One of my biggest headaches was what to do with the stacks of copies I routinely made of classified documents. If I threw them out, someone might notice; if I took them in to be shredded, someone surely would.

Georgia Buck, a black secretary in the office, at least had a reason not to produce: revenge. Several years earlier she had been involved in an affirmative action suit, and since then she had been shuffled—"detailed," in bureaucratese—among several offices in the department. When I knew her she was on her fifth detail, felt very persecuted, and on the rare occasions when she was given anything to do, worked far below her abilities. The climate of racism I witnessed at Agriculture was truly unnerving. Cobourn, Barnet and others did little to hide their disdain for affirmative action, often doing what they could to subvert it. "What do I have to do to get this guy hired," Cobourn would scream into the phone, "paint his face black?" Needless to say, such attitudes did nothing for department morale.

As the pleasure of my newfound financial security wore off, Bob Barnet and his incredible tongue began to drive me mad. In desperation, I did the unthinkable, going behind his back and forcing my way into a transfer to another office. My stock in the department plummeted, as expected, but at least I started getting some work done. Then came the real shocker. After several weeks of good old-fashioned productivity, Cobourn called me into his office. "Listen," he told me, "I have a political problem with your reports. I don't want you to take this personally, because you're doing a good job. But I can't justify the existence of these things in their present form. They're too comprehensive, and they're beinning to compete with those put out downstairs. He leaned forward. "All I really need is a quick and dirty job."

What was it with these people? They were all intelligent, potentially competent, as honest as the next guy. They had probably all entered government service with enthusiasm and dedication. Cobourn had been promoted rapidly, I was told; even Georgia, now so adamantly counterproductive, had once shown such ability that she had quickly become one of the highest paid secretaries in the building. But somewhere along the line they had all settled for far less than expected—and some had virtually embraced incompetence.

The odd thing was that most took no joy in their malfeasance. Sure, there were a few who delighted in petty corruption, but most were frustrated and dissatisfied. They felt, I realized, that theirs was the only rational course open, that the system demanded incompetence if they were to get along and get ahead.

But why? With my new instructions from Cobourn, I had plenty of leisure in which to ponder the question. The traditional explanations bandied about were threefold: that lacking a profit motive, there is no incentive to run government bureaucracies efficiently; that such organizations are, by size and character, inherently unwieldly and unmanageable; and that the comprehensive job security offered by the civil service system makes it impossible to fire incompetent employees.

There is probably some truth in the first two, though I suspect that not much capitalist zeal filters down into the bureaucracies of large corporations, and that many of them are just as bad. The third reason, however, is obvious and important: the federal bureaucracy is filled with people who should but can't be fired. The process is simply too time-consuming and tedious, involving hearing after hearing and appeal after appeal. It's much easier to kick someone sideways or even upstairs, shunting the problem to his next supervisor. Thus many a incompetent has received an unbroken string of promotions—and, in a nice twist, any boss who dares fire the slouch often draws a black mark against his or her own name. If other managers could handle the employee, superiors wonder, why couldn't this one?

But none of these three factors, though they suggest why poor performance is *tolerated* in bureaucracies, really answered my question of why individuals so often *choose* to be incompetent. One answer is obvious: the pressure toward mediocrity is simply too enormous to resist. After all, to stand out one need perform only slightly better than the prevailing level of incompetence. To do much more is to play the fool—doing others' work—and invites the hostility of coworkers.

But that also doesn't get to the heart of the problem. Individuals may bend to the norm, but why has that norm been established? Why have so many made that choice of mediocrity? Looking around me during long afternoons with nothing better to do, I decided that one big problem is that so many bureaucrats are effectively *stuck*.

At first, government employees rise through the ranks with ease. But once they have reached the highest mid-level grade, GS-12, further promotion becomes difficult. Federal agencies are bulging with professionals in their early 30s who have already reached their career peaks. They have little incentive to excel, but lots of incentive to last through the next 25 years, after which they can retire on a full pension.

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A few turn to private industry for advancement, but by the time they've invested five years in the bureaucracy and secured their $25,000 to $30,000 incomes, their marketability has eroded considerably. There is no "revolving door" for most bureaucrats, in part because of the low esteem in which they are held by the private sector, in part because so many gain only the most esoteric experience with their agencies. The system closes in around you.

Ambitious employees have two ways to get out of this trap, both of which tend to compound the problem. The first is to jump sideways as you jump up, finding high-paid jobs in other agencies that you often are only remotely qualified to fill. Most hiring officers prefer the relatively unqualified but established civil servant to the highly-qualified outsider, both because internal transfers avoid some of the complexities of civil service hiring and because all outsiders are unknown quantities.

The second road to glory—and mediocrity—is to join the rank of management, jumping beyond the GS-12 level. This is typically accomplished by building a small empire. For lack of a better index, one's importance, and thus one's grade, is ultimately determined by the number of employees supervised, the number of publications issued, the number of projects undertaken. This of course leads to the creation of unnecessary work, but it certainly explains why employees with nothing to do are kept around.

Even more damaging than empire building is the fact that most who jump into management from, say, research, simply lack the temperament and training to make tough administrative decisions. Some are so oblivious that their subordinates can operate more or less as they please. Cobourn, for example, never felt quite on top of Barnet's supposed field, so whenever Barnet scented danger he would simply invoke his expertise to cover for his lack of work. Secretaries and clerks are usually the only people whose performance is visible to the inept manager, so they often find themselves rebuked while professional misconduct goes undetected. An effective double standard develops, and morale suffers accordingly.

Even competent managers learn to keep their heads down and protect their flanks. They have no incentives to run a tight ship, and no way to fire incompetent employees. Perhaps most important, there are no real standards of performance demanded by the system, seemingly no way a middle manager's superiors can accurately measure the job he is doing. Advancement requires only that one sit tight, make no waves and quietly go about building one's empire.

Reaching this conclusion brought only limited satisfaction. It's nice to understand *why* you face 30 years of intolerable boredom and frustrations, but it hardly eases the pain. Two years after arriving, I'm about to leave.

When President Carter's Civil Service Reform Act finally passed, I asked a few of the old timers if they expected it to have any impact. Needless to say, they didn't. It's sad, but I imagine their complacency is justified. On paper, the act does have some strong points: it makes firing employees easier; it links salary hikes for all managers in the GS-13 to 15 range to performance, not just length of service; it creates an elite corps of about 8000 managers ranking GS-15 and above, the Senior Executive Service (SES), whose members will be rewarded for outstanding performance with substantial cash bonuses but will have less job security than others; and it prohibits reprisals against "whistle blowers."

The emphasis on improving management is important. But I wonder—will encouraging competition among managers lead to more efficient government, or simply to more and better empire building? No new standards for what constitutes good management have been laid down, and in their absence, it's fair to assume the bureaucrats will continue to respond to old ones.

Even if some agency directors do develop an adequate system to determine who deserves merit awards, I doubt financial incentives alone will suddenly equip inept managers with newfound skills. Dead wood is dead wood, and apart from more elaborate annual performance appraisals, managers will be given no magic new tools to help supervise their subordinates. As for firing, most managers, by training and inclination, will continue to shun such strong medicine; it will always be easier to reorganize someone out of a job or simply to neglect incompetence.

That is doubly true now that President Carter has proclaimed, as part of his anti-inflation program, that only 50 percent of outstanding vacancies will be filled. Hiring freezes, according to the old-timers I knew, are always counterproductive. They give employees even greater impunity than usual, because from a manager's point of view, an incompetent employee is better than no employee at all.

The new protection for whistle blowers, though also admirable, will effect only the few employees who witness gross impropriety. A few more GSA scandals may be exposed—an important goal, surely. But it is the commonplace, everyday abuses—hardly worthy of mention individually—that add up to such a stifling atmosphere, robbing employees of their motivation and self-esteem. Will the reform act change Georgia Buck's life, or Bob Barnet's? I just can't see it.

In fairness to President Carter, it is terribly difficult to alter individual behavior arising from long-standing and well-founded beliefs about how things operate. Just for *attempting* to shock the system out of its lethargy, the reform act is probably worthy of praise. But essentially, the act asks people to perform more productively without giving them any way, aside from firing people, to do so. It won't change much of anything. If I thought otherwise, I might stay on.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

A Beginning, An End

Question: What 19th-century Dutch novel was published in the US in 1927 with an introduction by D. H. Lawrence? And also, reportedly, was described by Freud as one of the 10 most outstanding works of world literature? Answer: I didn't know, either, until a film of the novel came along from Holland. *Max Havelaar*, published in Amsterdam in 1860, was written by Eduard Douwes Dekker under the pen name Multatuli which, says Lawrence, is Latin for "I suffered much." The book deals with Dutch rule in Indonesia and cruelty to Indonesians. It caused a furor and led, says Lawrence, to some betterment of conditions. But he emphasizes that the oppression was in fact carried out by native princes and existed long before the Dutch arrived to profit by it. That is one difference in the book from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, with which it has been compared.

For decades *Max Havelaar* was the only Dutch novel of any world reputation, and in recent decades it lost even that distinction. In 1976 it was filmed by Fons Rademakers who is himself, in a way, like the novel: he's the only Dutch filmmaker with any world reputation. (In fiction films. In documentaries there are Bert Haanstra and Joris Ivens.) Nonetheless his work has hardly been seen in the US. He was born in 1920, studied acting at home and in Paris, still acts occasionally, but went into directing and was an assistant to Renoir, Fellini, De Sica, David Lean and Jacques Becker. In Holland he made seven features before *Max Havelaar*, one of which (*Village on the River*) was nominated for an Oscar in 1958 as Best Foreign Film.

Thus Rademakers is a mature director of long experience. You would know this, anyway, from the first few minutes of *Max Havelaar* (Atlantic). You would know that you are in the hands of an unostentatiously competent, impassioned director: a man who knows what he is doing and does it reticently, yet with an enthusiasm that keeps what you see very much more than merely well-turned. As with Renoir, his intimate moments are composed to make the most of them humanely, not prettily; as with Lean, his large-scale action has dash but also intelligence.

The film's prime achievement is that it runs two hours and 45 minutes and is never boring. That negative compliment is, of course, made up of positives. The cinematography by Jan de Bont is exquisite: the colors show Indonesia as seductive as we want it to be without mushiness. The editing by Peter Bergema is alert (except for some shots that linger a moment after the action is finished—only a few frames make a difference). The film has dissatisfactions, but none of them has to do with the filming.

The story begins in Amsterdam in the 1850s, with Havelaar, impoverished, trying to interest a rich merchant in subsidizing publication of the manuscripts of his adventures. The merchant begins to read, and we flash back. Havelaar is a minor government official on Celebes who, after some success there, is assigned an assistant residency in a remote outpost on Java. He sails with his wife and small son. We have already seen that his predecessor on Java was poisoned by the native Regent for interference and that the murder was covered up with a false medical report; so we know what Havelaar is getting into. He gets into it. He tries to change the crooked system, not with blind heroics but with some understanding of custom. Still he fails; is assigned to a lesser post; resigns. Interwoven with this is the story of two very young Javanese lovers—played by two beautiful young people—whose lives end tragically in a rebellion.

Lawrence says that Dekker's novel is a satire. Not much satire in the film, except for the rather emphatic last sequence in which the camera pans slowly over Amsterdam burghers in church, singing a hymn of Christian love after we have just seen what their prosperity is built on. Other than that, the film is straightforward epic narrative. In fact, that's the film's chief drawback, its linear quality. Since I haven't read the book, I can't say whether Gerard Soeteman's screenplay is reductive, but the characters are painted a primary color at the beginning, and they never vary or deepen. Havelaar is high-minded and high-spirited: he dives into the shark-infested sea to save his boy's dog, he fights a duel to protect a native woman, then embraces the man whom he has wounded; he wins the hearts of all who are winnable; he never makes an error in judgment, only in expediency. His wife is unfailingly loyal. The young lovers are unfailingly idyllic. From the aspect of further dimensions in character or in any of the complex themes involved, the film does nothing. It moves through strophes that are made familiar very early.

But—not a negligible but—it moves through them very well. Rademakers directs with such vigor, such clarity, such compassion that, even though we soon realize more or less what we are going to see, we want to see it. Part of the appeal is sheer travelogue: but Rademakers integrates the exquisite Javanese landscapes—to show us why Havelaar loves this country and these people, why its ambiguities are going to

Films Worth Seeing

Autumn Sonata. Ingrid Bergman and Liv Ullmann as mother and daughter, directed by Ingmar Bergman. Still top of the list in every sense.

Comes a Horseman. A muddled "mod" Western, poor but recommended for Jane Fonda's performance, her best in years, as a stubborn lone rancher.

My Love Has Been Burning. Disregard the title. Kenji Mizoguchi's lovely film about Japanese women's struggle for equality, 1880s. If not first-rank Mizoguchi, still wonderful.

Superman. Oh, well, why not? Christopher Reeve is amiable as the Big S, and there's lots of *stuff*.

S.K.

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defeat him. Rademakers's eye for motion is precise and comprehending, whether it's a carriage struggling along a dirt track with its escort or Havelaar embracing his wife. When the young lovers are pursued by killers through a forest, it's a real *chase* (a reminder of Kurosawa), not some trite footage to be endured until that portion of the plot is fulfilled. Gentle details are handled gently: a boy with a flute; a tea party. If this film doesn't confirm Rademakers as a unique stylist, it gives us exceptionally enjoyable craft. (And a little late in Rademakers's day, too.)

A large part of his craft is his ability to cast and direct actors. His main choice brings us another belated discovery, Peter Faber, who plays Max. Faber fills—I mean *fills*—the role. He swings into it as surely as he does, often, on to horses. He looks a bit like Max von Sydow, and though the character doesn't give him the chance for the depths that von Sydow has shown, Faber has presence and power, the ease and sense of address that come from experience. Whatever Rademakers's abilities, the picture would sag without Faber.

Are the Javanese players professionals? There's a Malaysian film industry, and I've read of filming in Indonesia as well. Professional or not, every one of them is good, adroitly responsive to Rademakers—particularly Minih bin Misan as the father of the boy.

Mention of von Sydow reminds me of Jan Troell's *The Emigrants* and *The New Land*, based on novels by Vilhelm Moberg. *Max Havelaar* is the best (roughly) comparable film I've seen since: a film novel, with equal emphasis on both words. Troell's films are better, with more complex characters, a greater sense of growth, greater directorial sophistication. But, like them, *Max Havelaar* too makes a world and encloses us in it, making us feel released into new space at the same time that we are being enclosed. Anyway, if it did nothing more than, belatedly, introduce Rademakers and Faber, it would be very welcome.

Last summer, at La Scala in Milan, I saw an immense exhibit devoted to the theater and opera career of Luchino Visconti, who died in 1976. That career also tells us things about the careers of others—Marcello Mastroianni, for instance, playing the First Lord in a production of *As You Like It* in Rome in 1948. ("He was my discovery," Visconti bragged to me, quite justifiably, in our one meeting.) The exhibit confirmed, as would such a show about Ingmar Bergman, that the film career which won Visconti an international reputation was, at most, a third of his professional life.

And the exhibit showed something else, relevant to his last film, *The Innocent* (Analysis), now released here. I knew that he had been born rich and aristocratic and had become the Duke of Modrone, but the photographs of his childhood and early life were a vivid testimony of elegance. That turn-of-the-century elegance is exactly the milieu of *The Innocent*. Visually, the film seems a continuation of the early part of that exhibit.

With Visconti films, particularly the period pieces, I always feel that the first thing he did was to engage the scenic and costume designers. For *The Innocent* he got Mario Garbuglia and Piero Tosi, both of whom had worked with him many times before, in theater, opera and film. Then, I conjecture, he got coauthors for the screenplay, a cast, and all the rest.

That screenplay, from a D'Annunzio novel, is tedious. It's one more story of triangular interplay in high society (Rome, 1890s), told not for comedy or even comic rue (as in *The Earrings of Madame De . . .*) but moral exploration. And there is none. The protagonist is meant to be an atheist hero, a brave anarch who pays the price for his amorality. But he comes out only a sordid, spoiled, sensualist swine, with no kind of depth, so this story has no involvement for the viewer. Just the reverse. The trouble is underscored because the actor, Giancarlo Giannini, excellent in various sorts of comedy and caricature, doesn't have the quiet inner recesses that might have amplified the tiresome character (as Mastroianni might have done).

The rest of the cast varies. Laura Antonelli, as his wife, has some nice flavors of modesty, passion, fear and resolution. The late Rina Morelli, who was the Rosalind in that 1948 *As You Like It*, plays his mother personably. Jennifer O'Neill, as his mistress, is badly dubbed in Italian, and she looks like a bad dub of the 1940s star Linda Darnell.

In 1964 I spent a day with Visconti, from morning to midnight, his first day of shooting on *Sandra* in a *palazzo* in Volterra. (Only the day before, his picture had been in the Rome newspapers as an honor guard at the coffin of Palmiro Togliatti, the Communist leader.) He did something I've never seen done by any other director. He walked into a room of the *palazzo* that was ready for a scene, looked up at the lights without a light-meter, ordered alterations in the lighting, watched, and was satisfied. I thought of it when I watched the smooth golden light flow through the gorgeous interiors of *The Innocent*, day or night, winter or summer. Visconti knew how he wanted his films to look. It's only a coincidence, but a poignant one, that the look of his last film should be that of the world of his childhood and youth.

Michael Ullman on jazz

Doc Cheatham

When Doc Cheatham plays, he tilts his head way back, places his trumpet firmly against his lips, and spreads his arms so wide his elbows are close to shoulder height—he looks like a dignified, elderly version of the reveille-blowing bugler once popular in sentimental movies about boys' camps. Adolphus Cheatham has been playing the blues and jazz since the 1920s when, as an adolescent in Nashville, he first heard rare recordings of the new style of such trumpeters as Johnny Dunn. A flexible, refined player with a warm but restrained tone, Cheatham has rarely been out of the music business since he hit Chicago in 1926. Then a relatively unsophisticated youngster who was teaching himself to read music, Cheatham studied trumpet players: his early heroes included Louis Armstrong inevitably, but also the sweet-toned Arthur Whetsol, a star with the Duke Ellington band, and the sophisticated Bix Beiderbecke as well as the brash Roy Eldridge. Once a lead player for Cab Calloway, McKinney's

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Cottonpickers and Benny Carter's band, and often a Dixieland soloist, Doc Cheatham played with Latin bands when bop and rhythm and blues made unpopular the melodic, older style of jazz. But typically generous, Cheatham counts several bop trumpet players among his favorites: Fats Navarro, Clifford Brown and Clark Terry, all known for beautiful sound as well as for agility and harmonic sophistication. Although as he says, "the money has never been forthcoming," Cheatham looks on the vagaries of his long career without rancor. He's had a lot of experience, he says, and most of it's been fun.

Cheatham was born in Nashville in 1905. He taught himself both trumpet and saxophone, tutored only by the leader of a neighborhood children's band: "I just picked up the trumpet. I didn't have any schooling. We had a juvenile band there in the neighborhood—church-organized for kids—and we got some old secondhand instruments and had a little boys' band there. We weren't playing jazz. We were playing church music and marches mostly. They wouldn't allow us to play any jazz in church, but we'd sneak and play it anyway. We'd play anything else but what they wanted us to play. That was the way it started." Jazz came relatively late to Cheatham's home town: "In Nashville we had no way of listening to any jazz, other than the very few records that were coming out. There weren't too many of those, but we had bands come through there with shows—vaudeville shows, bands, theater." In his teens, Cheatham started to sit in the pit of those theaters, playing only for the experience: "We had a lot of bands coming up and that's the only way we could hear them."

At the same time, Cheatham started playing school dates. "We were playing dance music, you know, because Nashville was a school town and we had a lot of school dances. There was an old bar there. I used to go up and play with the piano player and play by ear. Called ourselves playing 'jazz.' For me it was the beginning of jazz. Because I didn't know anything before that time. I think in Louisiana they were doing it way before that. We didn't have too many jazz players in Nashville. Our piano player was a barber. He was an ear piano player. He couldn't play but one or two tunes, but he could play the blues. He knew the blues. They *always* knew the blues. I don't know where they got it from."

Cheatham was also going to Nashville's Bijou Theater to accompany the great blues singers: "The Bijou Theater. That was on the TOBA circuit. They had a circuit starting from Atlanta all the way up to Chicago and back all through the southern states and Midwest. I played for all the blues singers. The greatest for me, though, was Clara Smith. The blues singers in those days, the people who'd listen to them were what we called a lower class

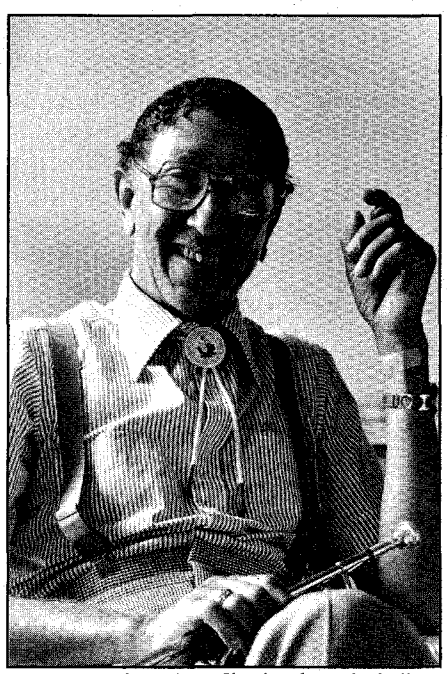

photo of Doc Cheatham by Michael Ullman

of people—the elite people looked down on blues singers. Because Nashville was a school town, everybody was so dignified that blues singers—they had a rough time drawing an audience other than the rough element of the people of the town and they would pack the theater to hear the blues. Clara Smith wasn't an educated type of person—very rough and mean—and those are the better blues singers than the educated type of performer that sang the blues. Clara made up her own lyrics and the lower people who came to hear her appreciated her because she spoke their language. Clara was down, really down. The gutter type of blues singer. Bessie was a little more refined."

Cheatham left Nashville for the first time almost by chance. "I was playing in the pit of the theater—not being paid—and a band came through there with a show with one of the kids who was in the Our Gang comedies. They called him Sunshine Sammy. He was about the only black kid in the Our Gang comedies and he created quite a reputation. He could sing, he could dance, he could clown. So his father took him on a tour. They came through Nashville at the time I was there and they heard me playing and they engaged me. I went on the road with that show. The show broke up because there were money problems and I joined other shows out there on the road. From one show to another, I ended up back in Nashville. A man came through by the name of Marion Hardy—the Alabamians—and they engaged me as a cornet player. They broke up and I wound up in Chicago. I stayed in Chicago in 1926 and bummed around there."

Excited by the talent in Chicago and interested in improving his playing, Cheatham set out to study the trumpeters around him: "I always tried to be a good musician and a good player and I got some pretty little gigs with Louis Armstrong's wife and other people. I've always studied trumpet players. I've always wanted to play like the best that I could hear and by being interested in the horn and in music, I taught myself a lot about harmony and I could tell one player from another. I liked Arthur Whetsol very much. I copied a lot of his things and I wanted to play like him. The New Orleans trumpet players always fascinated me. All of them had some different styles that come from the individual. Some type of feeling for jazz and I learned something from all of them. I made it my life study to listen to all those players. They were all inspiring to me."

Although he was excited by the music in Chicago, Cheatham soon realized that he was getting nowhere financially: he left for Philadelphia and Bobby Lee's Cottonpickers. "Philadelphia was a very fast city—jazz bands all over the place. So I worked with the Cottonpickers in Seagirt Inn in New Jersey until the seasonal thing slowed down there. I didn't care to work in the honky-tonks, because it was just a matter of everybody drinking and getting drunk and running around and staying up all night and I don't like that. So I had an offer to go to Wilber deParis's band—a better band than I ever played with before. Wilber was a man of many talents and he always wanted to be a great band leader." When that band failed, Cheatham went on to New York City. "I played around New York for a while with a band—gigging and playing theaters. At the time they had a lot of acts—dance acts, singers, and naturally they had a band. We played the Keith Circuit until the band petered out. Then I bummed around here and worked with Chick Webb's band. That was before he became famous. Then Sam Wooding,

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who had a great band in Europe, came to New York for a rest. He picked me up and took me to Europe with him." Cheatham was to record with Wooding in Barcelona in July 1929, helping out on the vocal of a song named "Carrie." He had worked on his reading while in Philadelphia so that he could arrange when necessary for the Sam Wooding orchestra: I "did a lot of arranging for Sam and then I got to the place where I stopped doing that because there were so many writers and arrangers that I devoted my time to the trumpet, instead of fooling around writing and carrying on."

In 1930, after a recording session in Paris with the Wooding band, Cheatham returned to New York, first for a return engagement with Marion Hardy's Alabamians, then for a time with McKinney's Cottonpickers, until finally he took a job as lead trumpeter with Cab Calloway's orchestra. He held this position through most of the 1930s, leaving in 1939 when he became ill. Cheatham returned to the United States because he feared he wasn't improving in Europe: "At that time you couldn't hear anybody in Europe and it was just a matter of playing just what you know—no competition. I wanted to improve myself, so I left and came back and joined Calloway."

Throughout the 1930s, Cab Calloway had a powerful big band, largely designed to back up his camp vocals. Cheatham enjoyed the work: "Cab was young and very, very hot then—popular. He was hard-working. We were a good band; we had a few band numbers, real fast. We did a lot of theater work. Later Cab slowed down and he decided to put in better players like Chu Berry and Jonah Jones, Shad Collins, Ben Webster, Eddie Barefield—he changed over quite a few of the men and his band became a great jazz band." Cheatham was playing lead trumpet. "I liked it because at that time the lead trumpet player really swung the whole band. And if the band was with him, he really knew it." But the work meant that Cheatham, a graceful and imaginative soloist, got few spots to himself: "When I left Cab, then I gave up all the lead trumpet and started doing solo work. I worked with Teddy Wilson's big band, Teddy Hill, Eddie Heywood—jumping from one band to another. I haven't done any lead playing to amount to anything since then."

A healthy, energetic man today, Cheatham had a couple of what he calls "breakdowns" during his big band years. "I broke down with Cab traveling around—like a whole collapse of the body systems. Of course, we weren't eating properly. Being on the road jumping around on buses, you don't get a chance to eat properly and you don't sleep right. And I was never a real strong, big, healthy guy. I was always a weakling type of man—and I'm very lucky that I'm not dead because I went through a whole lot. I laid off for about two years."

Cheatham had another problem in the 1940s. He had made his reputation as a lead trumpet player, but now the big bands were dying. He was a melodic player, and the inventors of bebop were running chord changes, as they called it. At first Cheatham couldn't hear this new music: "When I first heard it, I didn't like it because I was trained melodically. I was trained to play around the melody. They also were playing around the melody, but I couldn't hear it. I came up playing the 1-3-5 harmony. Well, they added the sixth or seventh, and now there's the 13th, 14th, 15th and all that stratosphere playing. The bop players could improvise much faster than anybody else. I think sometimes in the beginning it was too fast for the people to comprehend." In the late 1940s and 1950s, Cheatham took part in several of the unsuccessful efforts to revive the big bands: "Cab made a comeback with a big band and we almost starved to death. We played places on the road where, if we had competition from a place where they had blues singers and a tenor saxophone moaning and chicks singing the blues—well, they outdrew us and there was no more money. People weren't dancing anymore and the progressive and modern players came in."

When what Cheatham calls "jazz" was replaced by bebop, he took jobs with society bands and with Latin bands. "I played with Latin bands quite a few years, because that was the only thing I could do. I traveled to South America with great bands, because they started down there at that time playing jazz with a Latin beat. There was Machito and there was Ricardo Rey—he had one of the greatest."

When he left Rey in Puerto Rico, Cheatham returned to New York to an offer from Red Baliban, who had a dixieland band in the Village. The 1970s saw Doc's return to jazz playing and a revival of interest in his music. The process started about seven years ago—now more and more people are learning about older styles of American music, and there are now several jazz repertory orchestras dedicated to reviving the music of past masters. Doc Cheatham's experience with New Orleans blues-playing, with the small jump bands and the big bands of the 1930s, as well as his continued prowess as a trumpeter and his personal charm, make him an attractive musician to a variety of employers: "That's what's keeping me busy: the knowledge of all those old tunes from the early 1920s," he says too modestly.

In the New York Jazz Repertory Company, Cheatham both solos and reads. He travels to European jazz festivals, and plays with various small groups. He is still excited about music, still gaining experience. "Everything that I've done has been an experience that I can look back and I think it has paid off as far as my playing is concerned. I don't have any problems with that. I just love what I'm doing now. I play a variety of different things. I wouldn't want to just sit down and become a member of one band." In a manner reminiscent of Louis Armstrong, Cheatham guards his health and structures his life so he can concentrate on his music. But unlike Armstrong, Cheatham never wanted to

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become a star: "I never wanted to be a leader. I don't like that because it's a responsibility. Never wanted that. I just want to go and play. Now everything's coming easy. The money's not coming, but I don't worry too much about that. In music, well music's something where the music comes first. Unless you're a big shot—like Dizzy or Lionel—but I haven't reached that point yet. I doubt if I ever will, but I'm enjoying what I'm doing. That's all that matters."

Other people have enjoyed what Cheatham's been doing. Duke Ellington wanted to record him. "I have a copy of a paper where Duke wrote, 'There's one thing I'd like to do is to record Doc Cheatham.' That was one of the greatest compliments I've ever had. He died before I could get with him, although he wanted me to join the band." In the Repertory Orchestra performances, when Cheatham moves toward the microphone for a solo, the audiences sit up in anticipation and murmur gratefully. Cheatham's solos are still full of surprises—he can play in the declamatory style typical of Louis Armstrong, or use Bix's more coy phrasing. He can play dixie, swing, or in a style that most listeners would be tempted to call pure music.

I talked with Doc Cheatham soon after his July 1978 appearance at Newport in New York. He was still excited about playing with Lionel Hampton and he was looking forward to Europe. His one regret is that he has never been given an opportunity to control a recording session: "I have never yet had anyone come to me and say, 'Doc, I want you to make a recording album,' and then leave me alone and let me play what I want to do. In France, I came very close to it, but I still didn't have the right to pick who I wanted on it, to choose the things I wanted to play and the people I want to play with." As we finished our talk, Cheatham walked me to the nearest subway station. No man is a hero to his valet—few must be heroes to their neighbors, but Doc Cheatham is clearly recognized and admired on his block. He greeted everyone we met, commenting cheerfully on the cabbages one man was selling on a corner, waving graciously to the old people sitting on a park bench. Everyone was glad to see him, but Cheatham's mind was clearly running on the problems of getting that record session. If the chance came up, he told me before we left his apartment, he would have to decide about the rhythm section—and how could a man with so many musician friends choose among them? In a manner typical of this modest and considerate man, he concluded: "I'd rather not make the record if I had to hurt anybody's feelings. Because they're all great friends of mine—and they're all great players. If I thought I was hurting anyone's feelings, I'd rather not do it."

Books Considered

Main Currents of Marxism
Volume I: The Founders
Volume II: The Golden Age
Volume III: The Breakdown
by Leszek Kolakowski
translated by P. S. Falls

(Oxford; $19.95 per volume)

In Warsaw in late 1963, I asked a Communist official why Leszek Kolakowski, the most articulate of the revisionists, was allowed to remain in the Communist party. "Because," I was told, "Gomulka does not want to expel the only Marxist in Poland from the Communist party."

That cynical joke, so typical of those times in Poland, admitted a sordid truth: that official Polish Marxism is a total facade, an Aesopian language in which the claim that the working class wants this or that really means that a bureaucratic elite wants this or that. If one takes care to observe national differences, the same holds true for all of the official Marxisms. They are intellectually empty; they have less hold on the popular imagination than, say, the Horatio Alger myth in the United States (the latter is propagated by genuine illusions, not by armed force); and they function as ideologies in Marx's definition of the term, as rationalizations for exploitation and oppression. But then, as a fair number of westerners began to learn in 1956—and Kolakowski was one of their most important teachers—there is another Marxism, dedicated to humanist and democratic values, intellectually serious and even profound.

Kolakowski, however, has now rejected the distinction which he himself once did so much to develop. "Revisionism itself," he writes in the third volume of this extraordinary study, ". . . had a certain inner logic which, before long, carried it beyond the frontiers of Marxism. Anyone who took seriously the rules of rationalism could not be interested any longer in the degree of his own 'loyalty' to Marxist tradition or feel any inhibition about using other sources and theoretical stimuli. . . . Attempts to combine Marxism with trends originating elsewhere soon deprived it of its clear-cut doctrinal form; it became merely one of several contributions to intellectual history, instead of an all-embracing system of authoritative truths among which, if one looked hard enough, one could find the answer to everything."

If Kolakowski was right and Marxism had to be "an all-embracing system of authoritative truths" in order to survive as a distinctive intellectual and political impulse, I would join him in rejecting it. But I think he is wrong on this count. There is, I believe, a Marxism which is humane, democratic, rational and uninhibited about using other sources and theoretical stimuli. By sometimes ignoring that fact—for in some of his moods in *Main Currents*, he brilliantly recognizes it—I think Kolakowski becomes imprisoned in another ideology which is both infinitely more sophisticated than totalitarian "Marxism" and more democratic in its values but an ideology nevertheless—the scientistic version of contemporary social theory.

Before turning to some of the complex issues involved in this judgment, let me begin with some unsystematic, yet important, comments. I reject the thesis implied in the titles of these three volumes—that after the Founders came the Golden Age and then the Breakdown—yet I still regard these books

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as valuable and enriching for any student of Marxism. For one thing, Kolakowski has a most extraordinary range, a scholarly knowledge of all the sources, some of them rather obscure. I know of only one remotely comparable book, Predrag Vranicki's *History of Marxism*, and it is not available in English. (Not so incidentally, it recognizes Kolakowski as one of the most profound and important figures in contemporary Marxism.)

But then Kolakowski has depth as well as range. His summary of Hegelian thought is a masterpiece; his understanding of Marx's epistemology is profound (and he is not at all afraid to borrow a good part of it from Lukacs, whom he attacks, rightly, on other grounds); he recognizes and documents the continuity between the young and the mature Marx and shows how both of them were committed to the rights of the individual; and so on. If, then, I spend most of this review arguing my disagreements with Kolakowski, that does not imply a lack of appreciation for his accomplishment. Indeed, one of the reasons why I am so disturbed by his failures in these volumes is that they obscure that achievement and will make him a too easy target for the sectarian know-nothings of the left.

I should also note that I differ with Kolakowski on matters which have nothing to do with basic principles but rather relate to specific judgments. He is, I think, much too harsh on Rosa Luxemburg and does not give proper credit to her *Accumulation of Capital* (perhaps because Luxemburg was disastrously wrong on the national question in general and the Polish question in particular). He makes too much fun of Ernst Bloch without acknowledging Bloch's insights into the presence of Utopian impulses in the strangest places (circuses, French working-class cuisine) or his brilliant account of Hegel (which reminds me of Kolakowski on the same subject). And if he gives high marks to Lucien Goldmann's analysis of Jansenism and Pascal, he imputes a much too arrogant, and closed, version of Marxism to that author.

I could go on for pages dealing with nuances of judgment and sins of omission. I prefer to turn now to differences of principle. First, there is Kolakowski's transition from revisionist Marxism to social scientism. This may be my most basic critique of this theory since it concerns underlying methodology. I will examine the point as it relates to his discussion of Marx's theory of value.

The theory of value, Kolakowski writes, is "nothing but the definitive version of the theory of alienated labor." Properly qualified, that is quite right and an excellent repudiation of all those (Communists and anti-Communists) who see a chasm dividing the mature Marx from the young Marx. Then, still very much on target, Kolakowski comments that Marx was "not answering the question, 'What determines prices?' but the question, 'What is value?'" One wishes Paul Samuelson (and the legion of academic economists who preceeded him in attacking Marx for failing to answer a question he did not ask), had grasped this point.

Kolakowski thus expertly clears the ground in order to make his own attack. Marx's question is "metaphysical"; it functions in an "ideal" model of capitalism which his disciples have made immune to empirical contradiction. It may focus on a truth: ". . . that when human skill and effort are transformed into commodities they become abstract vehicles of currency and are subject to the impersonal laws of the market over which producers have no control." But still, the analysis "does not meet the normal requirements of a scientific hypothesis, especially that of falsifiability." More broadly, historical materialism does not offer "a set of rules that will lead to the same result if applied by anyone to the same material on different occasions."

There are a series of assumptions behind Kolakowski's critique but almost all of them can be reduced to a single principle: that social analysis is only valid if it proceeds by way of the same procedures as the analysis of non-social reality: social science must be scientific in the same sense, and even according to the same rules, as natural science. If, however, one adopts this method—and I think it wrong to do so—a rather surprising result emerges. If one compares Marx's predictions with those of mainstream economists living at the same time, his "metaphysical" approach clearly led to superior empirical generalizations. He developed a theory of crisis, of monopolistic concentration, of the separation of ownership and control in the corporation, etc., while many of them worked on elegant solutions to micro problems and repeated Say's proof that the system was not crisis-prone as the last word of macro trends.

Second, one cannot take Karl Popper's falsifiability criterion from the natural sciences and apply it to the social sciences. How, when one is dealing with unique, non-repeatable and uncontrollable events involving capricious human beings, can you specify a set of interpretative rules "that will lead to the same result if applied by anyone to the *same material* on different occasions" (emphasis added). The Michelson-Morley experiment can be repeated ad infinitum; the Great Crash of 1929 cannot be. Moreover, the implications of this scientific ideology are conservative even if some of its practitioners are not.

Richard Bernstein makes this point in one of the best and most thoughtful books of recent years, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*: "The issue is not whether it is possible to employ empirical and quantitative techniques, but rather how to interpret the results. There has been an overwhelming tendency in mainstream social science toward reification, toward mistaking historically conditioned social and political patterns for an unchangeable brute reality which is simply 'out there' to be confronted. . . . There has been a lack of critical self-consciousness among mainstream social scientists that the admonition to be 'realistic,' to study the way things are, is not so much a scientific imperative as a dubious moral

dis-sent'

I. To disagree, to differ in opinion; to be of contrary sentiment; without assent—
II. The act or state of dissenting; disagreement; refusal to conform—
III. (Latin *dis-*, apart, —*sentio*, feel)
—*Funk & Wagnalls Dictionary*

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imperative that has pernicious consequences in limiting human imagination and political and social possibilities."

This is a point which a number of contemporary Marxist thinkers have made with great skill—Jurgen Habermas and Karel Kosik, for instance—yet Kolakowski considers only the weakest statements of it, e.g. sweeping generalizations from the early Frankfurt school. The younger, revisionist Kolakowski provides a marvelous antidote for the theory he now holds. "One can try," he wrote at the end of the 1950s, "to interpret Stoic philosophy according to Marxist rules, yet despite the application of the same historical method, different results are possible." In forgetting his own wisdom, I think Kolakowski has—perhaps even inadvertently—taken on a scientism which is at variance with his own undogmatic mind. I am quite sure, for instance, that he would not be able to provide a single example of a non-Marxist economic theory which meets his criteria for a science. But why then criticize Marx on the basis of an empty and even dangerous category?

My second basic difference with Kolakowski has to do with both method and conclusions. It surfaces in his discussion of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution into Stalinism. Long before the revolution, Kolakowski usefully reminds us, Plekhanov had seen the possibility that Russian radicals might create "a renewal of Tsarist despotism on a Communist basis." But how did that happen in the wake of what Kolakowski rightly calls "a true revolution of the workers and peasants" in October 1917? (Those who doubt him on this point should read the recent, and excellent, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power* by Alexander Rabinowitch.) Kolakowski's answer is that Lenin and Trotsky were responsible, that Stalinism was implicit in their doctrines.

The Stalinists used to say that "Stalin is the Lenin of our day." That, Kolakowski says, is "entirely accurate." And a little later on, he comments that "Stalin was Trotsky *in actu*." Lenin, Kolakowski argues, believed that workers left to themselves would develop a petit-bourgeois consciousness (a mere trade union desire for "more"). Something like that point was recognized by Karl Kautsky and other democratic socialists of that period. But Lenin went far beyond Kautsky: the party became the keeper of the true proletarian consciousness, and ideological correctness, not actually class position, became the essential Marxist criterion. At that moment the theoretical foundations were indeed laid which could be used later to justify tyrannizing the workers in the workers' own best interest. There is no question that Lenin's analysis provided precedents for Stalin.

Similarly with Trotsky. When in power—as a prophet armed, in Deutscher's phase—he did indeed defend and employ terror. He became sensitive to the rights of the opposition only when he himself became an oppositionist and, up to the very moment of his assassination, he failed to see that Stalinist totalitarianism had utterly annihilated the revolution. But does that justify saying that "Stalin was Trotsky *in actu*"?

In his attack on Lenin and Trotsky, Kolakowski demonstrates a certain lack of intellectual charity which is not at all characteristic of his spirit, and which has important analytic consequences. That Leninism contained many propositions and precedents which paved the way to Stalinism is, to my mind, beyond dispute. But is Lenin to be charged with the unforeseeable consequences of his ideas in the light of our hindsight? That is to miss an extremely important human pathos: the Lenin of the last years of his life trying to mobilize against Stalin; the Lenin who, in essays like "On Co-Operation" and "Better, Fewer But Better," argued desperately, and not at all disrespectfully, with an imaginary Martov. That Trotsky did not learn the value of the democratic rights of opposition until he became an oppositionist himself is true—but he did learn the lesson. How, then, can one equate him with Stalin?

What is at stake is not simply a judgment about the political morality of two human beings; Kolakowski's approach has important methodological

NIGHT WASH

All seas are seas in the moon to these
lonely and full of light.
High above laundries and rooftops
the pinstriped silhouettes speak nightmare
as do the faces full of fire and orange peel.
Every citizen knows what's the trouble: *America's longest river is—New York; that's what they say, and I say so.*

Wonderful thing, electricity
all these neons and nylons spun dry by a dime
in the Fifth Street Laundramat. The city
must be flying a thousand kites tonight
with its thousands of different keys.
—Sir, excuse me, *sir*?
Excuse me interfering, but you don't want
to put that in—it's got a rubber backing, see? Oh, not at all . . .

Piles of workshirts, piles of leopard underthings,
it's like fishing upside down all night long, and then the moon rises
like armfuls of thready sleeves. Her voice
rising and falling, her boys folded sideways asleep on the bench:
—Listen, that old West Indian cleaning lady?
Ask anyone here, she never has change.
Come on, she's too wise . . .

Down in the Tombs
the prisoner's knuckles climb like stripes
of paint in the light. He dreams he hears
the voice of a pig he used to slop for his uncles.
It pokes its head
through the bars and says
"Have you brought any beet greens?"

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—You can never leave them alone at night. Like today
the stitching overseer says to me
If you can't keep the rhythm missus . . .
I says to him fire
me all you want, I don't take that shit
off anybody. That was a scare though—
you can't always get back on a day shift.

In the moonlight
the city rides serenely enough, its thousand light moorings
the hunted news in their eyes. Even the rivers
are tidal, as sailors and bankers know.
The glass bank of the Chase-Manhattan stands dark
over the Harbor. One last
light slowly moving around the top floor.

—No washing machines in the basement, that's
what's the trouble. The laundry would dry overnight
on the roof, in the wind. Well a month ago
you know, some big boys took this twelveyearold
little Spanish girl up there. Then they killed her, they
threw her, six stories down. Listen, the stone age or something
running around on those roofs. So this cop said to me
Your street is the bottom, he actually
said that to me. So what could I say—that it's great?

On the folding table the same
gestures repeat, smoothing and folding
the same ancient shirt. Or the old West Indian cleaning lady
pretending to finger her pockets for change. At midnight she'll prop
her gray spaghetti mop and glide toward you
in her black cotton trousers, her black
lavender face tilted up. Very clearly
she says to the world in dream-language
I mean to live.

Anne Winters

consequences. By insisting on the ideological continuity between Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, he abstracts from the tumultuous history that "read" Lenin's and Trotsky's texts. Their words became precedents—used in Trotsky's case to exile and murder him—under specific historic circumstances. Was it the document which interpreted itself, or the men, the movements, the events, which read the document? Both, of course. But Kolakowski tends to leave out one of those two aspects: the failure of the European revolution, the isolation and poverty of Russia, the difficulties faced by a movement which made a socialist revolution in a country incapable of socialism, and so on.

This point leads, in turn, to Kolakowski's evaluation of Marx and of Marxism. For if Lenin and Trotsky are responsible for Stalin, isn't Marx responsible for all three? And if Marxism "leads to" Stalinism, then any democrat—and certainly any socialist—would rejoice in its disappearance. With considerable ambiguity, that is where Kolakowski comes out.

I mention the ambiguity because his formulations of the problem are quite varied. In the first volume he asks "whether Marx's vision of social unity did not contain elements contrary to his own intention, and whether he is not to some extent responsible for the totalitarian form of Marxism." That is put with some subtlety. Volume Three is more blunt and accusing. "It would be absurd to say that Marxism was predestined to become the ideology of the self-glorifying Russian bureaucracy. Nevertheless it contained essential features, as opposed to accidental or secondary ones, that made it adaptable to this purpose." "Communism," Kolakowski says later on, "was a bastard version of the socialist ideal, owing its origins to many historical circumstances and chances, of which the Marxist ideology was one. But it cannot be said that the Marxist ideology was falsified in any sense."

Indeed, there are times when it seems that Kolakowski is saying that Stalinism (or at least some kind of institutionalized authoritarianism) is the only version of Marxism because the latter can only really exist when there is an official body to distinguish between truth and error. This, I think, is wrong; so is the notion that Stalinism did not falsify Marxism "in any sense." Marx's essential error, for Kolakowski, is that he projected the "romantic ideal of social unity, and Communism realized it in the only way feasible in an industrial society, namely by a despotic system of government."

There are many problems with this formulation. With one possible exception (Czechoslovakia) communism has never taken over in an industrial society. It has been an ideology of poverty-stricken, industrializing elites, which then rationalizes a post-industrializing, backward regime. Here, again, Kolakowski sees history as an ideological drama and abstracts from the historical context. How, for example, would he apply his theory to Italian communism? Second, there is no doubt that Marx sometimes wrote and thought in the spirit of the ideal of a total, seamless and voluntary social unity. But there is abundant evidence that he never really thought that there would be a time of "absolute knowledge" in the Hegelian sense, when the essential would be on the very surface of social life. As a philosopher he rejected that notion of the total reconciliation between subject and object, humankind and world, individual and society. Less speculatively, Marx tore into those German socialists who proposed to make education a state function, praising the United States and its local control of schools. The government and the church, he said, should both be kept out of the schools. That is hardly a proto-totalitarian sentiment.

On other counts I think Kolakowski also simplifies Marx in order to make him fit his thesis. He attributes to Marx a claim to scientific knowledge of the future which Marx expressly repudiated. Indeed, he did not even pretend to a complete scientific knowledge of the past, commenting on more than one occasion that he did not understand why classic Roman and Byzantine society did not develop into capitalism. Moreover, when Kolakowski says that Marx "afforded much foundation" for the view

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that "culture is 'nothing but' an instrument of class interests" he is being outrageously and uncharacteristically unfair to a revolutionary who prized a reactionary as his favorite novelist and who repeatedly insisted on the complexity of the relation between culture and social structure.

Am I saying, then, that there is a coherent and unchanging Marxism or even an authoritative Marxist method which has been defined once and for all? Not at all. I would subscribe to this proposition: "The concept, 'Marxism' . . . does not mean a doctrine which can only be totally accepted or denied, a universal system. It means a living philosophic inspiration inside a general mode of looking at the world." That, as you might suspect, is the younger Kolakowski. But then aren't the younger Kolakowski and the middle-aged Harrington irresponsibly vague when they put matters thus? Why, after all, bother with Marxism as such? As molecular biologists tacitly accept Darwin and put him behind them, why not take all that is good in Marx, all that has already been assimilated from his genius, and simply forget about the "ism"?

In part, my answer is personal. I confess to being so infuriated by the contemptuous ignorance which mainstream academics and opportunistic politicians display toward Marx that I want to make a gesture of solidarity with a dead man who can't defend himself against so many cheap shots (and Kolakowski's book, lest there be any misunderstanding, is certainly *not* in that category). Second, and on a more intellectual level, that critical distinction between social and natural sciences means that you cannot be a serious sociologist or economist without reading Marx today but that you can be a biologist without ever looking at Darwin. The natural sciences have different modes of truth; their subject matters neither talk back nor affect the distribution of wealth and power. It is not in the least bit silly to be a "Platonist" today—not in the sense of endorsing Plato's every word but in that of thinking in his spirit—and neither is it silly to be a Marxist.

Third, and more positively, the real Marx cannot be assimilated, either by academicians or by commissars, because he defined the perception of truth in terms of a social point of view and argued—rightly in my opinion—that, all things being equal, the view from the bottom of the society is more profound than that from the top. For him, as for Freud, knowledge was not "about" an external reality; it was a self-knowledge oriented toward emancipation, a fact which Kolakowski has explicated better than anyone else. Moreover, Marx understood long ago that the crucial question of the modern age was whether humans could develop a social mode of production capable of mastering the ineluctably social development of the means of production. In stagflationist, Jimmy Carter America—in the late-20th-century world—I find that a profoundly relevant point of departure.

Leszek Kolakowski is someone from whom I have learned over the years and whom I have admired. I learned more in this book, and for all my profound differences with him I cannot still my admiration. I see a brilliant and thoughtful man struggling with that catastrophe visited upon socialism which was, and is, Stalinism. If *Main Currents of Marxism* is flawed, even deeply flawed, it is also indispensable.

Michael Harrington

Michael Harrington is the national chairman of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee.

Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives by Frederick R. Karl

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux; $25)

This immense biography (some 500,000 words) by the ongoing editor of Conrad's letters is far more detailed and psychologically far more astute than Jocelyn Baines's pedestrian standard work of 1960, and far more reliable than the naive semi-official *Life and Letters* (1927) of Conrad's friend Jean-Aubry or than Jean-Aubry's compressed *The Sea Dreamer* (1957). In fact Frederick Karl's book is so rich in depressing detail, especially for the later years, that the reader would be well-advised to have on hand, as antidote or perhaps as preface, Norman Sherry's richly illustrated and sympathetic capsule biography, *Conrad and His World* (1972). This in turn could send the enthusiast to Sherry's two excellent volumes connecting the novels with Conrad's reading and experience: *Conrad's Eastern World* (1966) and *Conrad's Western World* (1971). Karl's detailed scholarship is indispensable to scholars. Yet it is heartening, after his minute record of neurotic illness and conflicting projects, and of a commercialism that intensified late in life, to hold Sherry's thin volume: to see the *Otago* and the *Torrens* (one of the greatest sailing ships, on which Conrad was mate) and hear Sherry's accents of loving praise.

Karl's very full picture of the later years is the saddening one of a great writer achieving full recognition and commercial success only after his best work was behind him, and of even seeming to have lost awareness of what constituted his greatness. It is disheartening to learn that Conrad not only hoped for the Nobel Prize, but thought that *The Rescue*, that *grande naufrage* of his literary life, a project that dogged him for a quarter of a century, would establish his claims to it. And it's dismaying that the at last solvent invalid wanted to be thought of as a popular writer for the general public, schemed to extract higher prices for his manuscripts and typescripts, and even wrote or translated some pages for the sake of sale to a collector rather than for problematic publication.

Karl is conventionally uneasy about the Freudian and Jungian speculations of others, and about psychological theories regarding Conrad's decline. Yet he himself is admirably willing to take risks. Psychological sophistication is the most obvious respect in which his book is far more rewarding than Baines's. Karl emphasizes the dual impulse both to break free of childhood dependency patterns and also to recreate them, in the fictions and in the relationships with his wife and with Ford. Conrad, Karl argues, was not merely a marginal man (displaced Pole, displaced seaman, writing in a foreign language, speaking with a thick accent, disaffected from the liberal ideas of his time, etc., etc.); he at

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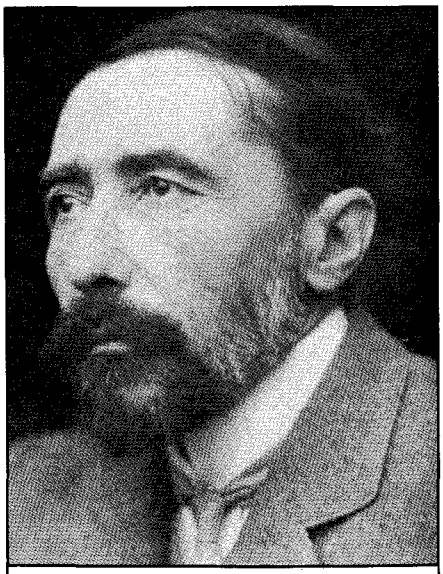
times consciously cultivated marginality. Karl provides much documentation, too, for study of the relationship of neurotic conflict and creativity. Conrad, like many other subjective writers, had to go through periods of stress, disabling distress even, before he could write powerfully, as Dostoevsky had first to lose at gambling or in some other way humiliate and defeat himself. Incidentally, Conrad's distrust of his *semblables*, his rejection of obvious identities, would repay further scrutiny: his distaste for Melville, for instance, and even frenzied repudiation of Dostoevsky.

I cannot agree with a number of Karl's speculations, though I sympathize with his audacity or, in some instances, caution. He seems to me mistaken in his denials of Conrad's misogyny (unreal idealization of women is a classic misogynist gesuture) and in his failure to see the degree to which the impressionist involutions were the protective screens of a temperamental evasiveness, rather than an effort at precision, "an author attempting to find the objective correlative of *what he saw at the moment he saw it*." Karl rightly sees *Victory* as the touchstone for any debate on Conrad's decline, but does not face the essential evidence: the quality of that novel's prose, and the simplicities of its psychology and its narrative method. Karl is highly interesting and shrewd, on the other hand, in pointing to an essential paradox: that Conrad's stories of romantic adventure, of action, collided with his preoccupation with passivity and immobilization. The conflict could give strength to *Lord Jim*, but may suggest one more reason why he found *The Rescue* so hard to finish.

Conrad's personal myth-making is of the highest interest for students of the creative process and, one might add, for students of the aging process. The powerful dreamer, surviving several mid-life crises and real breakdowns, was impelled to reconstruct the past and mythologize youthful adventure. Conrad conceived (as do many novelists) fictions that obliquely reflected earlier crises, whether of dependency or marginal identity, or uneasy father-son relationships. *Lord Jim*, *Under Western Eyes* and even *The Secret Agent*, Karl surmises, reflect memories of Conrad's patriotic and quasi-revolutionary father; in time he would have complex feelings toward his son Borys when Borys was serving —and was seriously wounded—in World War I.

Even more interesting is the way in which brief moments in a writer's life can become symbolic, retrospectively meaningful, mythical—the Congo adventure of course, but also the first voyage on the *Otago* (Conrad's first and only real command) in 1888. The three weeks of that exceedingly difficult voyage with a disabled crew fed fictions of self-testing, of insecurity and guilty secrecy, of crises of loyalty and brotherhood: very directly fed *The Shadow-Line* (1917) and "The Secret Sharer" (1910), but also the minor "Falk" (1903) and obliquely *Lord Jim* (1900). The introspective process remade, magnified and above all moralized a moment in the past; it could also attach it to a present crisis, as in the break with the once indispensable "secret sharer" Ford Madox Ford.



Conrad in 1904.

From a 1908 letter to John Galsworthy:
"Ah! my dear, you don't know what an inspiration-killing anxiety it is to think: 'Is it saleable?' There's nothing more cruel than to be caught between one's impulse, one's act, and that question, which for me simply is a question of life and death."
(from *Conrad and His World* by Norman Sherry. Reproduced by permission of Scribner's.)

The most fascinating personal myth was attached to a longer and far more shadowy period of Conrad's youth, the 24 months in and out of Marseilles (after the great leap from Poland at 18) and especially the months October, 1877-February or March, 1878. The extraordinary "true story" was of romantic involvement in Carlist conspiracy, and of gun-running to Spain on behalf of the Pretender, of the tiny "Tremolino" deliberately sunk to avoid capture by the coast guard, and a betraying member of the crew thrust overboard by the enraged Dominic Cervoni; a brief affair too with "Rita de Lastaola" (supposedly the Paula de Somogyi who was mistress of the Pretender himself); and a duel fought over her with an American adventurer which resulted in a bullet wound near Conrad's heart. This was more or less the history Conrad wanted to establish for posterity as well as for his family, friends and first biographer: the story made public through the autobiographical memoir *The Mirror of the Sea* (1906) juxtaposed against the ostensibly autobiographical novel *The Arrow of Gold* (1919).

The story has a number of discrepancies, the most important being that the wound probably came from attempted suicide. (I do not find, as Karl does, "psychological difficulties" in Paula de Somogyi having a liaison with a "young impecunious sailor": history is full of such indiscretions on the part of royal companions. But I agree that an actual affair was very probably fantasied.) Why did Conrad cling to and even embellish the story so long after the event? There is the necessity of sticking to the one big lie, as the embarrassed Faulkner long clung to his fiction of a war wound. And even in later life a Polish Catholic gentleman, however agnostic, could be ashamed of attempted suicide. Karl interestingly connects Rita de Lastaola with the American Jane Anderson (the wife of Deems Taylor) in 1916; the brief "vague and uncertain" episode "apparently set off his memories" or fantasies of a youthful great romance. Perhaps it was necessary for the aging exhausted writer, chained to his desk, with a fat and invalid wife, to remember dimly, imply, at last perhaps even come to believe himself that these things had really, or almost really, happened. Moreover, there remained at least this one great novel "plot" at the disposition of a tired writer.

And of course we still do not know what Conrad *was* up to in Marseilles, or whether he did (in this too anticipating a Faulknerian claim) engage in illegal activity on a Caribbean voyage. There are, inevitably, vacant places in Karl's rich book that one longs to fill. For instance: a friend of the Marseilles days, Clovis Hugues, would in time enrage members of the French Assembly by referring humorously to an anarchist

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Paris outrage, this reported in the *Times* only a few days before the story of the Greenwich Observatory attempt that eventually led to *The Secret Agent*. Great blanks remain in Conrad's early life in spite of so much intense research. One can surmise, for instance, that what Conrad saw and heard and imagined of the turbulence of Haiti during his weeks in Port-au-Prince, sunk in its medieval 19th-century chaos, may have had an important share in his psychologies of unrest, and in his divided allegiance to order and anarchy. It could have been an experience as formative as those first weeks on the *Otago*, though never directly exploited in fiction. But of it, unfortunately, we know nothing.

Albert Guerard

Albert Guerard is a novelist and critic. He is the author of *The Triumph of the Novel: Dickens, Dostoevsky, Faulkner* (Oxford).

Jorge Luis Borges: A Literary Biography by Emir Rodriquez Monegal

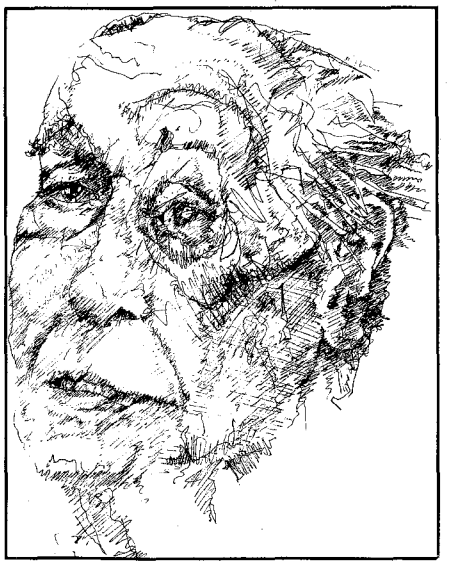
(Dutton; $19.95)

In his story about the man who set out to recompose, literally and entirely, the *Quixote* of Cervantes, Borges says in passing: "The composition of vast books is a laborious and impoverishing extravagance. To go for five hundred pages developing an idea whose perfect oral exposition is possible in a few minutes! A better course of procedure is to pretend that these books already exist, and then to offer a resume, a commentary." These remarks may well offer a clue to his own unique fictions, but we can be glad Emir Rodriquez Monegal was immune to such strictures. His new literary biography of Borges is absorbing from start to finish. It is also a necessary book, adding enormously to our knowledge of a major writer of this century.

Jorge Luis Borges, an Argentine, was the first Latin American writer to achieve international recognition. Even Pablo Neruda, Borges's chief rival for worldwide fame, remarked in a late interview (1970): "He's a great writer and thank heavens for that! All Spanish-speaking races are very proud that Borges exists. And Latin Americans, in particular, because before Borges we had very few writers to compare with European authors. We have had great writers, but a universal one, such as Borges, is a rarity in our countries." Exactly how Borges acquired this universality is, in a sense, the subject of Monegal's study.

What we observe in *Jorge Luis Borges: A Literary Biography* is the gradual translation of "Georgie" Borges, the bookish son of an upper-middle-class lawyer from Buenos Aires, into "Borges," a fictive construct which, in the end, takes possession of reality. The subtitle is appropriate in the extreme; probably no writer in this century, not even Joyce, has lived a life so exclusively composed of reading and writing. Heir to a congenital eye disease which in later years has left him totally blind, Borges's earliest impulse was to read as much as possible before darkness overwhelmed him. Helped by his paternal grandmother, Fanny Haslem (a native Englishwoman from Staffordshire), Borges first learned to read—in English. Reading granted him access to the fantasy world of his father's library; as he has confessed, this room has been his lifelong mental dwelling. He has lived not so much in Argentina as in the vast fictive realm of world literature.

Except for later in his life, when world acclaim brought with it the necessity of world travel, Borges has remained in Argentina apart from a half-decade when the entire family was stranded in Europe. Borges's father was profoundly ignorant of European politics and the imminent outbreak of war, so he took his wife, son and daughter abroad in 1914. This mistake seems eventually to have worked in Borges's favor; the family was forced to take up residence in Geneva, and Borges added both French and German to his growing erudition. After the war, the family moved to Spain, where Borges published, privately, his first slim pamphlet of verse and associated with a group of writers who called themselves Ultraists. In Seville and, later, Madrid, the flow of poems, articles and reviews began which has yet to subside. By the time Georgie returned to Buenos Aires in 1921, the invention of Borges was well underway.



drawing of Borges by David Schorr

The 1920s and 1930s were years of voracious reading, writing and editing for Borges, who was in his own twenties and thirties at the time. He lived at home with his parents and sister, which freed him to devote himself wholly to literary pursuits. Though his reputation outside of Argentina was small, he was the obvious leader among younger writers at home. However, it was not until the late 1930s that he turned to the writing of short fiction, the form upon which his acclaim will rest securely. Borges's shift to fiction coincides with the death of his father, his assumption of a "real" job as an assistant librarian, and a physical accident which nearly resulted in his death. The fiction coming out of these multiple crises was collected in *Ficciones* (1944) and *El Aleph* (1949), his two most famous books.

What Monegal's biography makes clear is the extraordinary continuity of Borges's life and work as a whole; his "fictions" come as no surprise in the wake of two decades of writing, supposedly "reviewing," on the knife edge between fact and fiction. Borges was from the beginning unrestrained by literal reality; indeed, many of his best reviews were of nonexistent books, as in "The Approach to Al-Mu'taism," which consists of a summary of a novel by Bombay barrister Mir Bahadur Ali, who like his novel does not exist. In this piece,

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as in everything, Borges pursues a kabbalistic image of the world wherein all things reduce to a condition of mystery. His gnomic style and bewildering supply of allusions create a universe of reflecting mirrors, a Baroque atmosphere which contains a limitless network of significance. Only in art, symbolized by the mythical Aleph, is the confluence of meaning possible; in the Aleph, or philosopher's stone, the sum total of the spatial universe occurs in a sphere barely one inch across.

There was strain in Borges's early essays, something distorted and disturbing, but fiction, "the paradise of the tale," proved liberating; the Gothic profusion of his mind had suddenly room to work in, and the success of his "fictions" is now legendary. Borges has become, though slowly, a world figure equal to Beckett or Nabokov. Though his acknowledgment in North America was belated (the early 1960s) he has progressed from being a minor cult figure to having general acceptance as a master, replete with innumerable imitators and detractors.

It is well that Monegal's book should come along at this moment. For Monegal clears up our embarrassing lack of information about Borges's life, which is so intimately reflected in his art. The connections had never before been made, except in a piecemeal way that tended to distort rather than clarify his work. We have now a huge supply of details and an exact chronology that covers seven full decades. Monegal's narrative is compulsive reading; the systematic convergence of Georgie Borges and the literary "Borges" makes for a facinating tale, which far from distracting us from the work itself, points us back in the direction of the work. There is at the end the eerie sense that Borges has somehow managed to fabricate a universal self capable, as in the Aleph, of seeing all things from all angles; in inventing this self, so patiently over many decades, he has become it. Borges and "Borges" are finally indistinguishable.

Jay Parini

Jay Parini directs the creative writing program at Dartmouth College. He has published one book of poems, *Singing in Time* (1972) and *Theodore Roethke: An American Romantic* (University of Massachusetts Press) will be out next fall.

Modern Art 19th and 20th Centuries. by Meyer Shapiro

(George Braziller; $20)

The first essay in this magisterial collection poses a question of profound simplicity: what do the apples in Cézanne's paintings *mean*? Meyer Shapiro's answer is a fascinating exercise in the uses of the humanistic intelligence.

Professor Shapiro begins by telling us that according to a well-established tradition the apples have *no* meaning: they are "no more than arbitrary assemblages of the studio, pure instrumentalities of the painter, like the casual objects with which a philosopher illustrates a point about perception and empirical knowledge." He quotes the representative opinion of an historian of Cézanne's art: "Why have so many apples been painted in modern times?—Because the simplified motif gave the painter an opportunity for concentrating on problems of form."

This impersonal aesthetic enjoys great prestige in modernist culture. To accept it, however, is to separate the man who suffers from the man who creates. It is to set the artist apart from other men, to make him a special case who has miraculously swept his mind of every motive except the aesthetic. It is to make the artist a consummate but soulless technician of the beautiful.

Professor Shapiro believes, on the contrary, that the artist's whole being is involved in his art and that, in a world where fewer and fewer people participate in their work with anything like their full emotion, the artist's passionate vocation is a social ideal of great value: in his "creativeness, sincerity and self reliance," he shows us how to live. If the work of art may be said to hold out the promise of happiness, then the artist's creative life contains the promise of freedom. Behind Professor Shapiro's inquiry into the meaning of Cézanne's apples lies a philosophy of life.

I can summarize Professor Shapiro's argument; I cannot reproduce the graceful motions of his mind, his way, for example, of pushing an hypothesis as far as it will go and then retreating from the force of his own logic, nor his clear, mobile, and eloquent prose. Professor Shapiro is an artist in the handling of ideas, psychoanalytic ideas in particular. Like the late Lionel Trilling, his colleague for many years at Columbia, Meyer Shapiro uses psychoanalysis to illuminate, never to explain. So to reduce his thought to one or two points, as I am about to do, does great violence to the textual richness of his essay.

It is Professor Shapiro's contention that Cézanne's apples were substitutions for the figure of the female nude; Cézanne displaced onto the apples the highly charged erotic feelings that had been expressed with great vehemence of execution in his explicit paintings of the nude. The agitated style of these early paintings, so different from the achieved serenity of the later still lifes, suggests that "Cézanne could not convey his feelings for women without anxiety." The apples allowed him to project his erotic feelings in an objective form without arousing his anxieties. They were a deliverance.

The unimaginative defender of common sense will dismiss this speculation out of hand, yet even he must be impressed by Professor Shapiro's evidence and by the tact with which he marshalls it.

The range of Professor Shapiro's evidence is wider than I can indicate. There is Jean Renoir's report of a conversation his father had with Cézanne, during which Cézanne let fall a tantalizing remark that hints at his substitution of apples for women: "I paint still lifes. Women models frighten me. The sluts are always watching you to catch you off your guard." There is the evidence of the paintings themselves: the earlier explicit works are either frenzied or defensive in manner; the later still lifes are done in the serene objective style for which Cézanne is famous. And there is of course the long tradition of western connotation stretching behind Cezanne, in which apples are a token of love or a figure for a woman's breasts. Nor can

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one overlook the round and sensuous shape and "succulent promise" of the apple itself.

But this is not the whole story of Cézanne's apples. Lionel Trilling often had to remind his middle-class students that the money which figures so centrally in Dostoevsky's novels is not just a symbolic displacement of repressed anal feelings: it is a melancholy fact of life in bourgeois society that people simply need the stuff in order to live. So too with Cézanne's apples: they are a very happy fact of nature, and to Cézanne, the countryman, they carried a wealth of manifest as well as latent meaning.

I cannot help thinking that in his preferences for the still life of apples—firm, compact, centered, organic objects of a commonplace yet subtle beauty—there is an acknowledged kinship of the painter and his objects, an avowal of a gifted withdrawn man who is more at home with the peasants and landscape of his province than with its 'upper classes and their sapless culture.'

The apples then are a complex symbol. They stand for Cézanne's forthright values as well as record his movement from fantasy to reality. It turns out that our banal association of apples with health is not so very far from the meaning of the apples of Cézanne.

II

Professor Shapiro's essay on Picasso's "Lady With a Fan" deals with the theme of transformation as self transformation, and once again he shows how an artist's style reflects the conflict between desire and defense in the artist.

The illustrations included in the text make Professor Shapiro's point eloquently. His method is to counterpose one of the drawings for the painting with the finished work. The woman in the drawing is a rather slack figure; her painted sister is tense with life. What, he asks, can account for the difference between them? Nothing less, it appears, than a momentous change in the depths of the artist himself, for the upraised arm and the proud bearing of the "Woman with a Fan" figure the first of the self transformations which have made Picasso a legend. Not long after this painting, "the painter of dolorous forms" becomes "the far reaching innovator, the revolutionary of modern art."

To realize this capacity for self transformation—and Picasso himself had spoken of his art as a sum of destructions—he had to overcome an earlier disposition to exploit a precocious virtuosity, a treasury of traditional skills . . . and he had also to master the feelings that inclined him to his early themes of the depressed and estranged.

We cannot recover the "affective moment" when Picasso decided to raise the arm of the "Woman with a Fan," but, in view of the decisiveness of this painting in the development of his art, we cannot doubt that this gesture is rich

"Woman with a Fan." National Gallery of Art, Washington

in personal meaning. To us its meaning is clear: it heralds the coming of a hero of our culture.

III

I can only point the reader to Shapiro's paper on Courbet and realism—it constitutes a virtual history of feeling in the 19th century—or to his moving discussion of Van Gogh's "Crows Over the Wheat Field," finished a few days before the painter's suicide in 1890. I must also pass over his affectionate homage to Chagall, his essay in defense of Seurat's humanism and spontaneity, and his salutes to Mondrian and Arshile Gorky. Nor is it possible to summarize, in any satisfactory way, Professor Shapiro's papers on the history of modern art, except to say that they are marked by the same profound humanism and historical imagination as his papers on the painters.

What I can do is sketch out the vision of modern art which this great scholar-critic's papers do not present so much as suggest. A good deal is implicit: Professor Shapiro's sense of historical complication makes him resist the force of his theoretical logic again and again. Nonetheless, I believe these papers contain the rudiments of an aesthetic of

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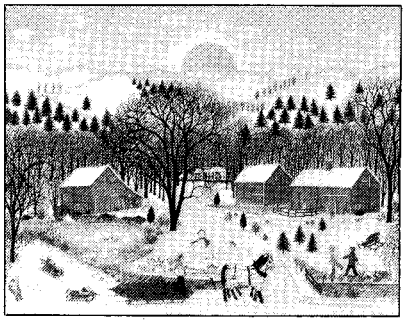

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modern art. Its major elements are as follows:

1. The social and economic ground of modern art is the uncontested advance of instrumental rationality over nearly every sphere of social life, a process which has been going on in the advanced industrial societies of the West at least since the days of the Impressionists. Words like modernization and urbanization point to aspects of this process; but Max Weber's phrase, "the iron cage of rationality," best expresses its human meaning. Impressionism, "which transformed nature into a private, unformalized field for sensitive vision," must be understood against this background. It made painting "an ideal domain of freedom; it attracted many who were tied unhappily to middle class jobs and moral standards, now increasingly problematic and stultifying with the advance of monopoly capitalism." I quote from a paper written in 1937.

2. From the late 19th century, therefore, the modern artist has practiced a kind of freedom that the very circumstances of social life (the highly articulated division of labor in modern industry being the best example) have made increasingly rare. Then, with the spread of abstraction in painting, the modern artist gained a "new liberty." The Impressionists took their principles of order from the objects imaged in their paintings. With abstraction, the painter could project his own order; the idea of art shifted from "the aspect of imagery to its expressive, constructive, inventive side." The abstract artist creates from a greater range of subjectivity and projects his feeling in a much greater variety of forms than the representational painters before him. In the instantaneous organization of his spontaneity as he puts paint to canvas, he provokes "an automatic production of chance." The work of abstract art is the embodied energy of the artist's freedom and selfhood.

3. So energetic a display of freedom is unsettling, and from the Armory Show in 1913 to the present, abstract art has baffled and enraged. This painting doesn't communicate by any known grammar of meaning; the viewer must enter into a kind of communion with it —must be capable of the same openness and spontaneity as the artist. His freedom summons our freedom as well as our social and psychological defenses against freedom. Abstract art, which has often been called dehumanizing, is thus deeply and problematically human.

4. Abstract art requires a special language of appreciation and judgment. Partly this is a technical language of line, color, shape and tone. But, to a striking degree, it is the language we use to describe our feelings, our moral qualities, and our consciousness. Forthright, candid, frank, intense, simple, pure, authentic, sincere—these are the words Professor Shapiro uses to describe abstract paintings. These words also point to the ineradicably human character of this art.

It is surely ironic then that an art built on honesty of feeling should have become so encrusted with cultural snobbery, so rotten with every kind of commercial corruption. Professor Shapiro is aware of this corruption (and as early as 1937 we find him writing that "the demands for liberty in art are no longer directed against a fettering tradition of nature; the aesthetic of abstraction has itself become a brake on new movements"). Still, he remains abstract art's great champion. Just now abstract painting needs some of his integrity and his rare and beautiful intellectual grace. Conviction can also be a form of freedom.

Jack Beatty

Social Origins of the New South Alabama, 1860-1885 by Jonathan M. Wiener

(Louisiana State University Press; $14.95)

Travelers to the South in the last quarter of the 19th century were often struck by the way the land and the people appeared as they would have imagined them 50 years before. A single crop—cotton, sugar, or tobacco—dominated the fields, as it had under slavery. Mules had gained ascendency over horses and oxen, but little of the machinery rapidly being introduced on northern and western farms was finding its way south. Black people, and a growing number of poor whites, were living in rough cabins at the edges of small farms. Nothing, in short, seemed to have changed. It was if the Civil War had not been.

And yet the South was new; it had to be. The North as well as the South said it was. The absence of slavery certainly made it new in 1865, but what accounts for the currency of the phrase "New South" in 1865, and ever since? Possibly, in 1890, no section of the country could have boasted more people who would have disavowed that they were living in a new society. Still, I believe that Arnold Toynbee, quoted by C. Vann Woodward in his own great book on the New South, was right in imagining that a boy living in the South in 1897 would have felt that "history had happened to my people in my part of the world." This mythical boy would also have felt confident that his people had come through some earth-shattering events remarkably unchanged.

This is a view close to the social reality described by Jonathan M. Wiener in his superb treatment of post-Civil War southern history, *Social Origins of the New South*. Wiener argues that the planter class persisted in intra-regional power and influence well into recent times. He demonstrates that in Alabama, at least, planters lost their slaves, some land, and their hold on national power in the war—"that was what the war had been about"—but, upon the ruins of the Confederacy, they pursued a political program starkly in line with their antebellum goals.

Wiener expresses his debt to Woodward at the beginning. It was Woodward who established that "social conflict has lain at the root of southern politics." By this is meant not only conflict between whites and blacks, but among whites competing for the land, labor, and courthouses of the South. To Wiener, the planters are more often victorious than to Woodward, and less willing to compromise or combine with their labor, merchant and industrial foes. But Wiener's book is much more than the retelling of Woodward's story from a new point of view. The questions he asks are themselves new, and his answers are profound, mischievous and, it seems to me, correct.

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Wiener is also indebted to Barrington Moore Jr., whose *Social Origins of Democracy and Dictatorship* provides the "theoretical framework" for much of his own work. Wiener came to write about the South as a student of modernization, of the development of modern societies out of feudal beginnings. He found in the South what he calls "the 'Prussian Road' to modern society"—a term borrowed from Moore. This road differs from the "classic capitalist method" in several crucial ways. An old ruling class, self-conscious and fighting for its life—in the case of the South, the old planter families *after* the Civil War—beats off challenges from the working and commercial classes. Victorious, it promotes the growth of its region in ways that further its own conservative interests. So southern planters choose to expand the agrarian economy and protect their position through labor-intensive rather than capital-intensive development. Profits come not from mechanizing agriculture but from "squeezing more out of the laborers." To succeed, this "intensification" requires laws to tie down the laborers and prevent their moving to other jobs. Not only economic development, but civil rights and democracy too, are hindered by the Prussian Road.

Deriving the Prussian Road from southern history is a stroke of genius. It shatters the myopia and romanticism which handcuff even our most alert historians of the South. It places the southern experience in the company of recurrent, explicable world events, thereby enlarging our critical capacity and our understanding.

Wiener starts by showing that the planters did indeed persist "in a quantitative sense." Using census returns for a sample base of 236 planters in the Alabama black belt, he constructs an index of "persistence"—a guide to the number of planter families who retained their land and status from 1860 through 1870, the decade of the Civil War and Reconstruction. While previous studies have determined that the antebellum planter class was destroyed, Wiener finds that the planters' "persistence rate" of 43 percent was remarkably close to the rate of 47 percent for the pre-war decade, 1850 through 1860.

The former slaves resisted the planters' favored style of gang labor, withdrew their women and children from the fields, and appealed to their federal allies—the occupying Union Army and the Freedmen's Bureau—to secure them land. Differences between the freedmen and their old masters were settled, Wiener observes, "not by the workings of the invisible hand of the free market, but rather by a process that can only be called class conflict." In effect, the freedmen's allies turned against them and supported their wartime enemies, the planters. Blacks would be protected from violent persecution but the extent of their freedom was to be free "to enter a wage contract with a planter." White northerners and southerners alike agreed on this. Laws were passed prohibiting employers from enticing laborers away from other plantations—laws which, not incidentally, reduced conflict within the planter class. Harsh penalties were fixed for blacks who broke their labor contracts. Beyond the law, the Klan and other vigilantes rode to prevent emigration out of the black belt.

But the freedmen's unrelenting desire to have land of their own, and the labor shortage *they* induced, led to sharecropping. Keen to the subtleties of this new system, Wiener charts its gains and losses. Sharecroppers won release from gang labor, and in the new family work unit planters got back the labor of the women and children. The old plantations were divided into smaller farms but the sharecropper neither owned the land he worked nor was free to leave it. Thus, Wiener observes, "he was distinct from both the northern proletarian and the free capitalist farmer." Furthermore, "the loss of economies of scale and the end of centralized management" meant "precisely a move away from a mature capitalist organization of agriculture."

Merchants, too, wanted to own the land or, if not to own it outright, to reap the greater part of its agricultural surplus. These southern tradesmen were following "in the footsteps of European merchants two and three centuries earlier." The fortunes of both merchant groups were tied to the prevailing form of agriculture and they wanted, therefore, not to change the form of ownership but to "muscle in" on the profits.

An Alabama law of 1866 gave merchant lienholders "a share of the cotton as soon as it was baled," enabling them to hold the cotton for speculation and make a profit which before the war went only to the planters. The law gave merchants and planters equal lien on the growers' cotton—which favored the merchants who had more credit to extend in the first place. They now had power over tenants and sharecroppers; they had virtually none over slaves. In this position, Wiener says, quoting Woodward, merchants "divorced landownership from its age old prerogatives."

Woodward and others have argued that as a result of the crop lien law landlords and merchants merged in a new landholding class. This is not what happened, Wiener says. It is crucial to ask, as he does, "whether merchants became landlords, or planters became merchants." He follows the crop-lien struggle into the 1880s, by which time subsequent lien laws had wiped out the merchants' advantage, given the landlords a lien "superior to all other liens for rent and *advances*," and made of the planter a "planter-merchant." There was indeed a merger, but not "of social classes." Two economic functions—rent and credit—merged "in the hands of a single class." There was, Wiener explains, "no transformation of the structure of power, but rather the return to the planters of their traditional position of domination over the black plantation force—one which entailed a metamorphosis of the planters."

In the popular view, the planters' defeat in the war "unleashed southern industrialists who . . . moved quickly to make themselves the region's new ruling class." But the anti-corporate sentiment of Alabama's post-war constitutional conventions, the effective opposition to easing the state's laws of incorporation and stockholder liability, the continuing hostility to tariffs and the snarled history of railroad building all point to a different conclusion. Nothing happened quickly. The conventions and the planter-controlled legislature looked backward for their industrial goals. Planters, after slavery, wanted what they had wanted before—"industrial development without a bourgeois revolution, without the rise of an independent and powerful class of industrialists."

The planters were aided by northern capitalists who, by *withholding* their money, proved they were in no hurry to develop rivals. They wanted markets for their own goods, not competing centers of production. Take Birmingham, a city generally thought of as an example of the rapid industrial development "unleashed" by the war. Wiener illustrates how slow, painful, and incomplete that growth really was. Not until 1879 did the city "take off." But even afterward its growth was purposely retarded, and events which promised to make it "the largest steel manufacturing center in

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the universe" had the actual effect of stifling it. For instance, after US Steel's purchase of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company in 1907, Birmingham's production of iron "remained almost stationary," while its share in the national production fell drastically. Soon after the purchase, "Carnegie effectively removed 'Pennsylvania's most formidable enemy' from competition by raising prices on Birmingham steel."

In a rich concluding chapter, Wiener narrates the long battle for ideological supremacy between advocates of a "New South" and adherents to the "Old South." Planters and spokesmen for the agrarian way decried "mere *material* prosperity" and urged men to model themselves after the "cultured, heroic men" of the past. So potent was the Old South myth, so essential to a white population smarting of defeat, that it could not be dislodged by a view of life associated with the despised North. Besides, New South advocates were not strong enough to attack it. Their social base was small and concentrated in the sinful cities; their opponents, the planters, may have espoused a myth but they were "not simply mythic." Rather, they were real men and women in possession of "extensive economic and political power." Out of weakness, then, New South ideologists embraced the myth of the Old South. In an enlightened comparison, Wiener drives home just how weak they were. "Can one imagine their predecessors making such concessions?" he asks. "The seventeenth-century English Calvinists who made themselves 'new men,' the eighteenth-century Parisian revolutionary intellectuals, the northern Republicans of the 1850s calling for 'free soil, free labor, free men'—these heroic predecessors of the New South ideologists never for a moment praised the grace and dignity of the traditional landed elite or honored those who had fought to preserve the old agrarian order."

Where were the blacks—the bone of contention—in all of this? Down on the farm, "well-fed, well-clothed, and contented," according to the planter press. Reviving the language used to defend their treatment of slaves, planters depicted themselves as the true friends and guardians of the blacks. They "seized upon" what Wiener calls "one of the New South program's major weaknesses—the lack of a coherent scheme of what role the former slaves would play." Some Alabama industrialists frankly admitted they were seeking black laborers; others had visions of attracting immigrants to work in industry and dreamed that the blacks would wither away. Planters, knowing the blacks would not do this, offered to take care of the social program by keeping the blacks in agriculture. Of course, they were protecting their labor force.

Wiener asks, " . . . if planters' professed paternalism was defeated by the forces of the New South, how would the blacks' subservient status be enforced, if not by a harsher racism?" He leans toward the conjecture that a New South would have moved in the direction of more virulent forms of racism than had prevailed under the paternalist ethic. I lean the other way.

Planters unveiled their paternalism only after reasserting control over the black labor force. But between the end of the Civil War and the early 1870s, many planters were saying that blacks wouldn't work, that that South had to get rid of them and import white labor. Shaken by the loss of their slaves, they had no more of a "coherent scheme" for blacks at that time than did the industrialists. Had the industrialists won, they might have done exactly what the planters did: put the blacks to work. This would have had radical repercussions. To keep their black labor, planters would have had to compromise and retrench—as they had in adopting sharecropping. They would have had to relax the conditions of tenancy, and perhaps even sell more land than they did, some of it to blacks. The impact of a large southern black proletariat on a national labor movement would have been tremendous. This, too, is conjecture. It is based on the belief that the blacks were the one southern people eager to change the social relations of production, the one people anywhere who disbelieved in the myth of the Old South until the rest of us caught up with them.

Theodore Rosengarten

Theodore Rosengarten lives in McClellanville, South Carolina and contributes frequently to *TNR*.

Correspondence, *from page 7*

because, as stated by General George M. Seignious, newly appointed head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, at his first press conference, "if certain weapons are forbidden, then we will set about inventing others more deadly." Paul Warnke, former head of this agency said the same thing in a different way—"SALT only prohibits what it prohibits."

If the arms race isn't stopped, Carter's economic program will fail, and we shall all, if we live, continue to exist in a world of nuclear terror.

John C. Davis
Consulting Economist
New Port Richey, Florida

Lessons of the past

To the editors:

In Henry Fairlie's incisive article, "A Decade of Reaction" (*TNR*, January 6), the point is made that the expressionist artist of the 1970s is self-serving. Moreover, Fairlie contends that this countercultural individual is little more than a personification of the entire decade. This statement seems only too true. There is slight difference, indeed, between the contemporary junior executive, ignoring family and friends in his drive for self-advancement, and the "earthworks artist," unheeding a sick society in his yen to express self. But how different from a former artist, himself a member of the counterculture, who was able to speak to the world with his portrayal of the Spanish Civil War. Picasso's social sense was so penetrating that its expression in art led to a forced exile from his homeland. Utilizing Fairlie's model, Picasso's art did not swallow up his politics; rather, it embraced his political vision. Isn't it odd how our past continues to teach us lessons?

Paul Vincent
Wilson Clark Memorial Library
Portland, Oregon

A Paradox

To the editors:

Why should women pay taxes when they don't have equal rights?

Carol Ash
La Jolla, California

P.S. And don't tell me they have equal rights when men are spending millions to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment.

Coming:
Robert Boyers on
the Culture of Narcissism.

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Washington Diarist

President Pangloss

"What is optimism?" Candide was asked. "Alas," he answered, "it is the mania for pretending that all is well when all is ill." President Carter is an optimist. He's told us that often enough, yet he is not, he assured James Reston, who reassured us, "a cock-eyed optimist." Yet this president cannot see the distinction between hope and illusion. In fact he knows no disillusion, and goes cheerily from hope to frustrated hope. He told Reston that he doesn't much worry about the future, or his critics, or public opinion for that matter. Moreover, Carter is not sure that the people are "educable," though he shows no signs of doubting that he is their rightful educator. Not since Herbert Hoover has such self-confidence rested so inappropriately on the shoulders of an American president.

Carter is a captive of gestures. He apparently has persuaded himself, for example, that the fly-in of 15 unarmed American fighter jets is a credible demonstration of strength and commitment to Saudi Arabia. Since it turned out that several European countries wouldn't let these jets refuel at American bases within their borders, I suspect this attempt to show that the US still rules the skies has left the Wahabi princes quaking in their Gucci loafers. Everybody knows by now, of course, that it is not we but the Russians who rule the seas, the relevant seas at least. And the Saudis themselves have demonstrated that even a fragile monarchy holding out desperately against the future can lead Uncle Sam around by his nose. For years now the US has been basing its Middle East policies on the assumption that Saudi Arabia will be an influence for oil price stability and for Arab-Israeli peace. But the Saudis failed to urge price moderation at the last OPEC meeting and undermined Sadat's peace efforts at the last Arab summit. They know we know all this, yet they see that no one in Washington is changing his tune about the "cooperative" Saudis.

Carter now admits that he asked for but couldn't get from Peking, even in exchange for just about everything it wanted, a public commitment that its "differences with Taiwan would be resolved peacefully." So he is satisfied with the sweet nothings Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping has confided to touring senators about the mainland's pacific designs on the island and its 17 million people. Even a skeptic like Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia made agreeable noises about realism, a rubric under which the cruelest crimes have been committed and condoned. William Shaw, an Asia specialist at Harvard, pointed out in *The Boston Globe* last week that Taiwan and the mainland have evolved into "two quite distinct political, social and economic systems." By what rationale can statehood be denied to one and both statehood and dominion recognized for the other? Senators Kennedy, Cranston and Church are belatedly asking for a resolution to express the American people's "deep concern for the peace, prosperity and welfare of the people on Taiwan." It's a nice but empty gesture. Having joined the stampede for what was squeamishly called "normalization," and having surrendered on the principle of sovereignty in the process, neither these senators nor anyone else will be able to do much once Peking decides it's reunion time for Taiwan.

Sometimes even sweet nothings aren't required to entice this administration to romance a murderous adversary. Andrew Young's recent remarks about the PLO were just woolly enough to be his own: "the UN supports the underdog," the PLO has been a "moderating influence," etc. But if Young's call for a new look at the Palestine Liberation Organization was genuinely his own initiative, he should have been sacked because ambassadors aren't supposed to take initiatives against official policy. In any case, my old and good friend Andy Young has been on a tight chain lately. This is why I suspect that Young spoke here for his State Department superiors who want to discourage a separate settlement between Egypt and Israel. What better way to undermine the tenuous remaining basis for an agreement than to tell Sadat that Washington wants the PLO in?

In this best of all possible worlds, there must always be a moderate and stable power to preserve the balance in the Gulf, latterly known as the Persian Gulf. My wisest friend suggested to me the other day that Washington's new candidate, now that the Persians no longer qualify, is bound to be Iraq. "No Michael," I said. (I was not addressing *TNR*'s managing editor.) "You must be kidding." Well the president hasn't said it yet, but I heard it at a Georgetown party that same evening, the next day at the Palm restaurant and a few hours later on the telephone from a breathless inside-dopester who, unfortunately, is always right about the bad news and wrong about the good. I'd missed the quasi-official announcement a fortnight earlier in an article by Marvine Howe in the *Times*'s "Week in Review." The proof offered of Iraq's new moderation was the recent execution of 18 Communists, on top of 21 others murdered earlier this year. Very appealing.

The shah escaped the scaffold. Deposing a monarch is rarely enough: with his head still on, he might come back. That's why history usually prefers regicide. Apparently nothing less than the shah's head will satisfy the Ayatollah Khomeini. He may have to settle for less. His triumphal return to Tehran is likely to put the present government out of business and intensify the suffering of the Iranian people. No one should have been surprised by the fate of the Pahlavi regime. Anybody who'd read Samuel Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* (Yale) would know its disintegration was only a matter of time—and doubtless a matter of justice as well. High American officials ignored early and late warnings from Israeli and oil company sources. Hear no evil, speak no evil. The shah never should have been our chosen vessel—at least not on his terms. All the same, his accomplishments, like his cruelties, are not insignificant.

Khomeini's aims are very clear: The reconquest of Iran from the modern world. For centuries two strains have been at war in Persia: one is national identity, deriving from Cyrus and building on the glories of Persepolis; another is Islamic conquest. The shah, like Ataturk in Turkey, elevated the national idea; the mullahs celebrate the religious one. But Khomeini is no ordinary Moslem cleric: he is more intolerant and more charismatic. He is anti-western, anti-Christian, anti-Jewish, anti-minority, anti-woman. Even so, he doesn't lack intellectual supporters. Any tyrant has assistant professors who'll rationalize him. Don't believe a word you hear that casts this fanatic as a social democrat. Carter at last has ordered a top-level study of whether there's an Islamic crusade in the world. But he's already told Reston there isn't, adding some clichés about a revolt against materialism. Meanwhile, Carter's told Iran's momentary rulers he'll sell them lots of weapons. To shoot whom? It doesn't matter.

M.P.

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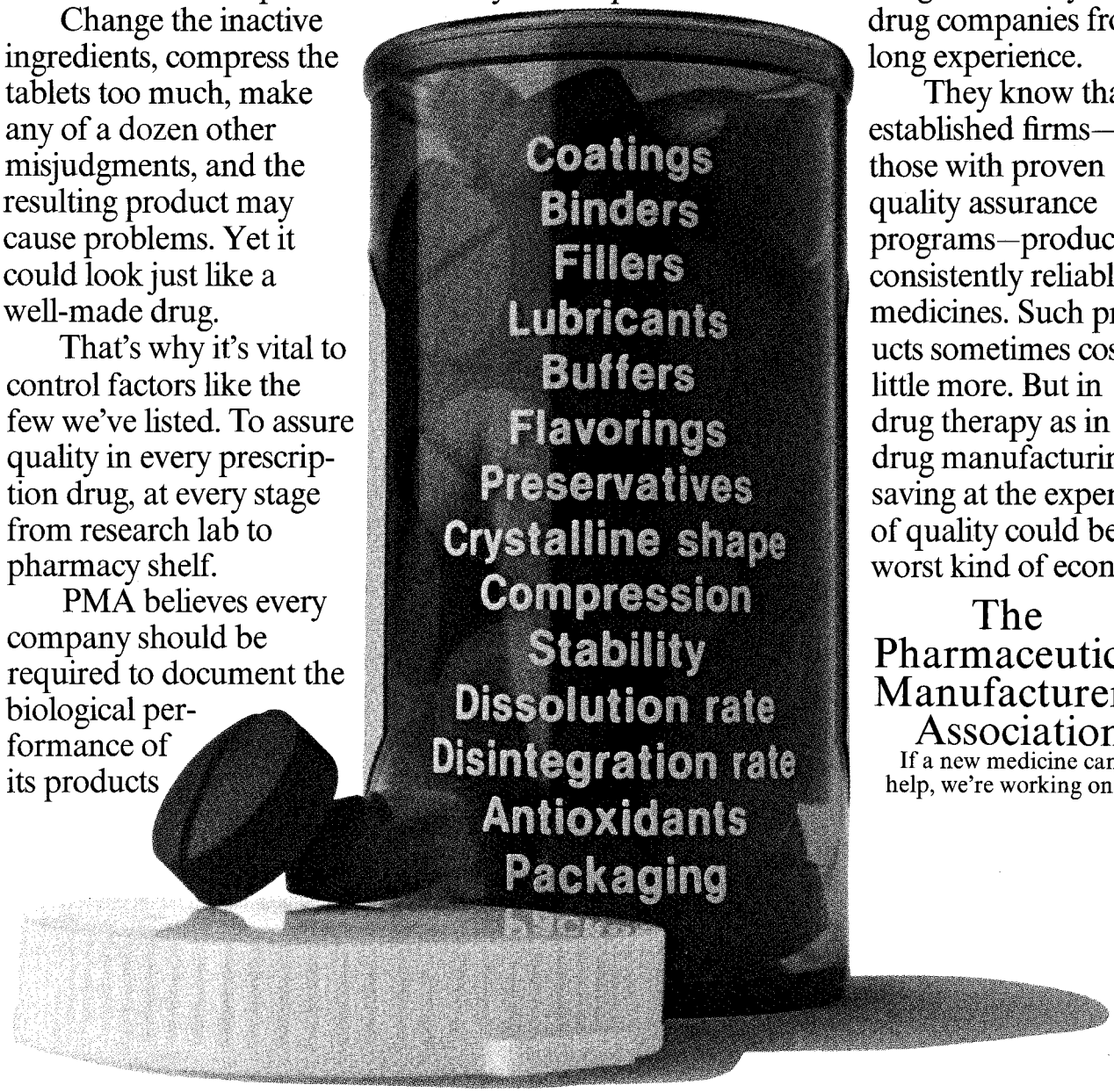

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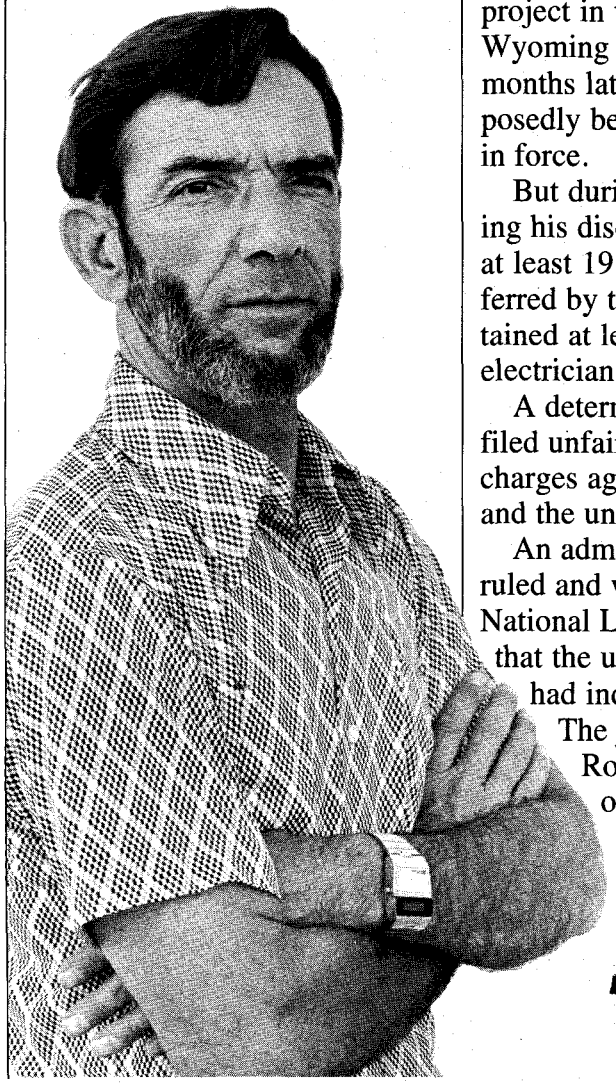

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